MARVEL

"Another shining example of the exemplary work that Ashley Allen is doing with Illyana Rasputina on this book." – AIPT

MAGIK

LOBOS

SHADOWS OF RESISTANCE

ASHLEY ALLEN JESÚS HERVÁS GERMÁN PERALTA MATT HORAK ARTHUR HESLI

"*Magik* continues to be an exciting and dark journey for Illyana."
– NERD INITATIVE

WHAT A MONOLOGUE.
HI, BOYS. I HEARD YOU HAD A FEW COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT? WELL, I'M ALL EARS.
ISN'T SHE *THOUGHTFUL?* SAY THANK YOU.

MAGIK AND MIRAGE TAKE ON AN ARMY OF MAGIC HUNTERS – AND A LITERAL DRAGON!

TO SAVE THEIR FRIEND CAL, MAGIK AND HER FELLOW FORMER NEW MUTANT MIRAGE have no choice but to seek help from the order his ancestors founded. But will Illyana's new power make her a perfect recruit or a natural hellraiser? And how will the traditional leader Dani Moonstar respond when Illyana starts to take charge? Plus: Madelyne Pryor, the Goblin Queen, comes to Magik for help to retain control of Limbo. But what kind of threat requires two queens of Limbo to defeat it? More importantly, what kind of trouble can Illyana and Madelyne get into together?!

COLLECTING *MAGIK (2025) #6-10* — BY ASHLEY ALLEN, JESÚS HERVÁS, GERMÁN PERALTA, MATT HORAK AND ARTHUR HESLI.

T+ MARVEL

MAGIK

SHADOWS OF RESISTANCE

ILLYANA survived a horrific childhood in Limbo and even became its monarch. But to be free, **MAGIK** passed her crown to **MADELYNE PRYOR**, the **GOBLIN QUEEN**.

Recently, Magik fought the demon **LIMINAL**. And though Liminal was defeated, someone she cared for paid the price, leaving Magik to wonder if she's doomed to hurt people...

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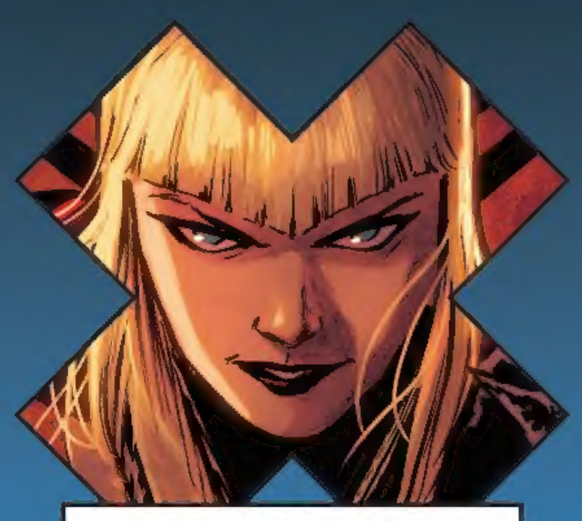
BORN A MUTANT, RAISED IN LIMBO, ILLYANA RASPUTINA BALANCES UNLIKE WORLDS EVERY DAY. ARMED WITH HER SOULSWORD, HER TELEPORTING MUTANT STEPPING DISCS AND INCREDIBLE MYSTIC POWERS, SHE IS WHAT MONSTERS FEAR!

MAGIK

DANI MOONSTAR



ILLYANA RASPUTINA

LIMINAL

SHADOWS OF RESISTANCE

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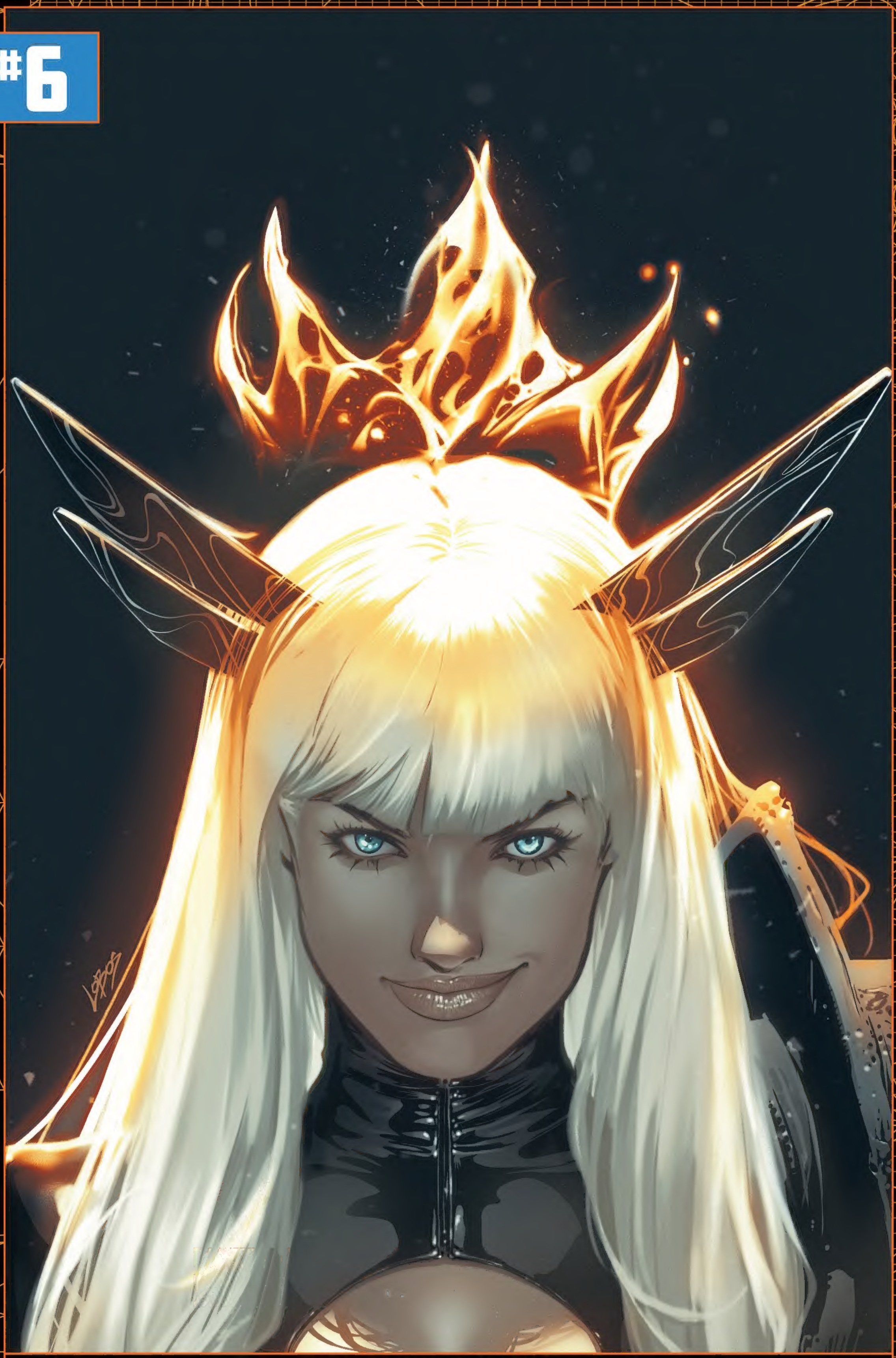

"THE ROAD BACK HOME"

LIMBO EMBASSY, MANHATTAN.
THE QUEEN OF LIMBO'S CURRENT RESIDENCE.

FORGIVE MY BOLDNESS, YOUR MAJESTY, BUT THIS REBEL GROUP POSES A REAL THREAT TO YOUR LEGITIMACY AS *GOBLIN QUEEN.*

THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF LIMBO--

CAN WAIT, K'YRB. I HAVE FAR BIGGER THREATS TO MANAGE TODAY. A MUTANT QUEEN OF A DEMONIC REALM IS UNSURPRISINGLY DRAWING CONCERN FROM THE U.N.

IF THEY TAKE ACTION, I WILL NOT HAVE A NATION TO RULE. I WILL ENSURE THOSE REJECTED BY THE WORLD WILL CONTINUE TO FIND REFUGE HERE.

THEY WILL NOT THREATEN US. I TRUST YOU HAVE PREPARED THE NECESSARY RESOLUTION?

CLIK

!

LATELY, HOPELESSNESS HAS BEEN GNAWING AT ME.

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK, MINNESOTA.

DANI HASN'T CONTACTED ME ONCE ABOUT CAL.

I HATE FEELING IN THE DARK. BUT CYCLOPS UNDERSTANDS I NEED A DISTRACTION. I'M GRATEFUL FOR HIS ENDLESS WAVE OF MISSIONS.

I HOPE THESE ARE THE LAST OF LIMINAL'S DEMONS. YOU WERE RIGHT TO INVOLVE US WITH THE CLEAN-UP, ILLYANA.

PSYLOCKE IS RIGHT, MAGIK. IT'S ALSO A GREAT EXCUSE FOR THE *X-MEN* TO GET AWAY FROM ALASKA FOR A WHILE. DESPITE BEING SURROUNDED BY-- BY--BY--

ACHOO!

EW, GROSS! AT LEAST *COVER* YOUR MOUTH, JUGGERNAUT!

FOR A MOMENT, SOMETHING BURNS AT THE BACK OF MY MIND.

THIS MENTAL PAIN...SOMETHING'S WRONG.

#$@#! THE EMBASSY!

MANHATTAN.

I'VE ACCEPTED MY CONNECTION TO LIMBO WILL NEVER TRULY BE SEVERED. I THOUGHT I HAD MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE PUTTING MADELYNE IN CHARGE.

BUT LOOKING AT THIS DESTRUCTION...I THINK I MADE A MISTAKE.

MADELYNE?!

BURST

WHO DID THIS?

ILLYANA? WHAT? YOU *SHOULDN'T* BE HERE...

MADELYNE IS JEAN GREY'S CLONE, WITH ACCESS TO TELEPATHY, TELEKINESIS AND SORCERY--*WHAT* WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO HARM HER?

YOU.

SKREE!

KNEEL.

THUD

LET'S SEE WHAT *SECRETS* YOU HAVE TO HIDE.

SCREECH

HMPH. RIGGING MY OFFICE TO EXPLODE?

SUCH A PITIFUL ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT.

THOUGH I SUPPOSE I DIDN'T HIRE YOU FOR YOUR BRAINS.

=SIGH= MY AIDE WAS CORRECT. I MUST DEAL WITH LIMBO'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

I DIDN'T WANT TO INVOLVE YOU, ILLYANA. BUT IF YOU MUST BULLDOZE YOUR WAY IN, AT LEAST COME INSIDE.

I DIDN'T GIVE UP LIMBO'S CROWN TO ISOLATE YOU, MADDIE. I DID IT TO GET AWAY FROM THE HELLISH REALM I GREW UP IN.

KRAKOA GAVE ME A NEW START. FIGURED YOU'D APPRECIATE THE SAME.

MADELYNE WAS CREATED BY MR. SINISTER TO BE A TOOL. LIKE I WAS SHAPED BY BELASCO. I SEE A KINDRED SPIRIT IN HER.

I'M ALWAYS HERE TO HELP. LIMBO SHOULD NEVER BE ONE PERSON'S RESPONSIBILITY.

BUT IT IS *MINE*.

I WASN'T SAYING IT WASN'T--

IT'S ALREADY BEEN *A DAY*, ILLYANA. COME, LET'S TALK WHERE PRYING EYES CANNOT SEE.

CHANNEL 3

SOME OF MY...*SUBJECTS* DON'T APPRECIATE THE NUANCES OF THE TIME I SPEND IN NEW YORK. THEY THINK THAT I NEGLECT MY DUTIES IN LIMBO IN FAVOR OF HUMANITY.

THIS WAS A WARNING. THEY WANT ME DEAD AND MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY DESTROYED.

THIS IS THE LAST THING I NEED WITH EVERYTHING GOING ON WITH CAL. PUTTING MADDIE IN CHARGE WAS SUPPOSED TO FREE UP MY TIME.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO BABYSIT.

YOU SHOULD HAVE CALLED ME SOONER.

HELP FROM THE PREVIOUS QUEEN OF LIMBO? DO YOU THINK SO LOW OF ME, ILLYANA?

BUT I CAN'T DEAL WITH ANY MORE BAD PRESS.

SNAP

FLASH

FWOOSH

WOOSH

THEY ARE RELENTLESS.

FLASH

SNAP

CHANNEL 3

IT WAS A MISTAKE TO DISCOUNT THIS REBEL GROUP'S TENACITY.

MY INTEL SAYS THEY'RE CREATING A WEAPON TO RIVAL MY SCYTHE OF SORROWS OR YOUR SOULSWORD. INDIVIDUALLY, THEY'RE TOO WEAK--

BUT COLLECTIVELY, THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO LAY CLAIM TO LIMBO.

HOW DID YOU LET THIS SLIP PAST YOU, MADDIE?

DON'T PIN THIS ON ME, ILLYANA. I HAVE BEEN FAR MORE ACTIVE OF A RULER THAN YOU EVER WERE.

UNLIKE YOU, I WILL NOT GIVE UP MY CLAIM TO LIMBO.

WELL THEN, I GUESS YOU HAVE IT COVERED. STILL, I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME TAGGING ALONG.

AFTER YOU, YOUR *HIGHNESS.*

THAT'S NOT EVEN THE RIGHT TERM.

LIMBO.

SEEING THIS CASTLE AGAIN...I HATE EVERYTHING IT BRINGS UP.

WOW, I *LOVE* WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH THE PLACE. EVEN *MORE* COBWEBS? HOW *CHIC.*

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I WAS HERE...

...BUT YES, REGARDLESS OF WHAT I TRY, THIS CASTLE SEEMS TO *REBEL* AGAINST ME IN EVEN THE *TINIEST* ASPECTS.

MY QUEEN! YOU'VE RETURNED!

SUMMON THE WAR COUNCIL. WE HAVE A GUEST.

YOU'RE *HONORED,* I'M SURE.

WHAT INFORMATION HAVE YOU GATHERED ABOUT THE REBELS' RITUAL?

THEY'VE USED ANCIENT MAGIC TO HIDE THE LOCATION OF THEIR LEADERS FROM DETECTION. HOWEVER, A SCOUTING MISSION REVEALED THEY'RE IN THE *RAVINE OF THE WASTES.*

THAT'S ONLY A FEW HOURS AWAY. WHY HASN'T THIS BEEN DEALT WITH?

THEY QUESTION HER EVERY MOVE. IF MADDIE CAN'T KEEP UP, I'LL HAVE TO STEP IN.

WE CANNOT ACT WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF THE MONARCH. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN LIMBO--

...

...

OH, *NOW* YOU WANT MY OPINION?

I WON'T BE QUESTIONED BY MY OWN COUNCIL. GATHER A BATTALION TO SURROUND THE AREA. I WILL *NOT* HAVE THEM ESCAPE.

YOU DARE QUESTION MY ORDER?! YOU SAY YOU REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF YOUR QUEEN...WELL, SHE IS *HERE!*

FORGIVE US, YOUR MAJESTY, BUT ILLYANA RASPUTINA HOLDS THE SOULSWORD. SHE WAS FORGED IN THIS REALM. SHE *EQUALLY* HOLDS THE RIGHT TO RULE.

NEWS FLASH, I GAVE UP THE THRONE. WHEN *MADDIE* GIVES YOU AN ORDER, *I* EXPECT YOU TO FOLLOW IT.

I WILL HANDLE THIS BY MYSELF.

SEND THE BATTALION TO BACK US UP.

OR DON'T. BUT KNOW THERE WILL BE CONSEQUENCES. I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN YOUR "HOSPITALITY" WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.

MADDIE, WAIT!

THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO INVOLVE YOU, ILLYANA.

I'M FAMILIAR WITH THE WAYS OF LIMBO. POWER IS *TAKEN* FROM YOU THE MINUTE YOU'RE JUDGED UNFIT.

I WASN'T UNDERMINING YOU!

THIS REALM REFLECTS ME MORE THAN IT EVER DID YOU. I'M *USED* TO THINGS BEING *STOLEN* AWAY FROM ME.

I *REFUSE* TO LET THIS PITIFUL REBEL FACTION DO THE SAME.

RAVINE OF THE WASTES.

THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF WHEN I THINK OF LIMBO--A BARREN WASTELAND DEVOID OF HOPE.

MAYBE IT'S FITTING THAT I'M BACK HERE.

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OUR MORTAL QUEENS RULE BY FORGING A CONNECTION WITH LIMBO. THEIR WEAPONS ARE A DIRECT MANIFESTATION OF THEIR SOVEREIGNTY.

IT WAS WHEN I SAW THE GOBLIN QUEEN FORGE HER SCYTHE OF SORROWS THAT I HAD MY EPIPHANY.

WHY DON'T WE TEAR THE VERY FABRIC OF LIMBO AND CREATE A BLADE TO CLAIM OUR COLLECTIVE BIRTHRIGHT TO RULE?

THE WITCH IS DISTRACTED. BELASCO'S CHILD REFUSES TO STEP FOOT IN LIMBO. THEY ARE DIVIDED.

BOTH WILL FALL BY END OF DAY TO *GAR'HN, THE ALCHEMIST.*

WHAT A MONOLOGUE.

HI, BOYS. I HEARD YOU HAD A FEW COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT? WELL, I'M ALL EARS.

ISN'T SHE *THOUGHTFUL*? SAY THANK YOU.

TOGETHER, WE WILL MAKE QUICK WORK OF THESE LOWLIFE DEMONS.

WELL? SPEAK!

I WILL NOT LOWER MYSELF TO SPEAK TO A HUMAN.

HUMAN MEAT ARE OUR PLAYTHINGS. NOT OUR RULERS.

YOU ARE TOO WEAK. GO BACK TO YOUR PATHETIC ILK OR BE CONSUMED.

HMM. THESE ARE ALL GOOD POINTS.

BUT MY ANSWER IS NO.

I'M A TELEPATH, DARLING. PLEASE TRY HARDER.

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT MAGIC I CAN DERIVE FROM YOUR CORPSE!

HOW *INNOVATIVE*. A *DEMON* USING BLOOD MAGIC? YOU *TRULY* ARE AHEAD OF YOUR TIME.

!!!

HE SUMMONED THE RAPIER OUT OF THE OTHER DEMON'S HANDS?!

WE HOLD EQUAL CLAIM TO THE WEAPON, FALLEN QUEEN. YOUR BRITTLE SOULSWORD HOLDS NO POWER IN THIS BATTLE.

THIS SWORD EATS THE POWER OF YOUR BLADE.

BUT CAN IT EAT *ALL* MY POWER?

HMM, "FALLEN QUEEN" IS CATCHY. MAYBE I CAN GET THE X-MEN TO START CALLING ME THAT.

YOUR SNARK IS STARTING TO GET OLD. I HAVE NO CLUE HOW THE X-MEN TOLERATE IT!

WHAT CAN I SAY, MADDIE? I'M EFFICIENT AT WHAT I DO.

IT'S NOT SNARK IF YOU CAN BACK IT UP.

I CAN SENSE MADDIE'S ANNOYANCE.

DEAD OF LIMBO, *RISE.*

MAYBE I'M BEING HARSH. BUT IF SHE CAN'T DEAL WITH ME, HOW WILL SHE EVER CONTROL LIMBO?

YOU *KNOW* I CAN HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS, ILLYANA. I DIDN'T ASK FOR A PERFORMANCE REVIEW.

I WANT TO TRUST MADDIE, BUT I CAN'T HAVE ANOTHER INVASION. WE JUST CLEANED UP LIMINAL'S MESS.

ARE YOUR CONCERNS WITH ME, MAGIK, OR WITH YOURSELF?!

OOF!

THUP

YOUR TELEPATHIC ABILITIES MIGHT BE ABLE TO SENSE THE WEAKER OF US, MY DEAR QUEEN. BUT YOU FORGOT THAT OUR SPELL QUIETS OUR LEADERSHIP'S LOCATIONS.

YOU RELY SO MUCH ON THAT MENTAL NOISE THAT YOU FORGET TO LOOK BEHIND YOU.

WHAT A COSTLY MISTAKE.

NO, NOT AGAIN. NO ONE ELSE WILL BE HURT BECAUSE OF MY ACTIONS.

HE SUMMONS THE BLADE JUST LIKE I DO WITH MY SOULSWORD.

YET THE FABRIC OF LIMBO HAS ALWAYS BEEN WOVEN THROUGH MY MUTANT ABILITY. I ACCEPT THAT NOW.

DOES THE SAME APPLY TO ITS WEAPONS?

WHAT IS THIS?!

THIS SWORD WAS FORGED FROM THE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS OF LIMBO'S RESIDENTS. IT IS A *COLLECTIVE*.

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I HAVE PLENTY OF ***BAD MEMORIES*** ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PLACE.

YOU ARE A RESIDENT OF LIMBO NO LONGER, CHILD.

CALL ME ITS PRODIGAL DAUGHTER.

ARGH!

BUMM

NAMES HAVE POWER IN LIMBO. AND YOU HAVE NOT NAMED THIS SWORD.

YOUR *CLAIM* HAS NOT BEEN *SOLIDIFIED*, GAR'HN.

WOOSH

I FORGED MY SOULSWORD FROM THE *BENEVOLENCE* AND *HOPE* LIMBO COULD NOT SNUFF OUT IN MY SOUL.

THIS BLADE IS ITS OPPOSITE. IT CONSUMES ALL MAGIC IN ITS PATH TO GROW STRONGER.

BEHOLD, THE *WRAITHSWORD*.

THUD

YOU THINK THIS IS OVER?! I WILL BE A MARTYR! I AM BELASCO'S TRUE SUCCESSOR!

A REBELLION IS RISING, AND I HAVE EQUIPPED THEM WITH MORE THAN ENOUGH TO TAKE YOU DOWN!

I LOOK FORWARD TO IT. MAYBE I'LL GET TO ADD A FEW MORE NEW WEAPONS TO MY COLLECTION.

I'VE STUNNED THE ***NEURONS*** CONNECTED TO HIS MUSCLES. IT'S TEMPORARY, BUT HE'LL BE ***IMMOBILIZED*** UNTIL WE TRANSPORT HIM TO THE DUNGEONS.

JUGGERNAUT'S GOING TO BE ***SOOO*** JEALOUS WHEN HE SEES THE WRAITHSWORD. BEST SOUVENIR EVER.

AFTER THIS FIASCO, I GUESS YOU WANT LIMBO BACK, NO?

=SNORT= YOU THINK I WANT LIMBO BACK? BECAUSE OF ONE "***MISTAKE***"?

MADDIE, I CAUSED INVASIONS OF ***EARTH*** WHEN I CONTROLLED LIMBO.

WELL, TECHNICALLY, I DID TOO.

I'M IN GOOD COMPANY, THEN.

MADDIE, I GAVE YOU LIMBO, BUT I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN HANDLE IT. THIS REALM BREAKS EVEN THE BEST OF US.

I DON'T WANT MY ***HEALING*** TO CAUSE YOU HARM.

ILLYANA, I ***WANT*** LIMBO. I THOUGHT THIS ENTIRE TIME THAT YOU WANTED BACK CONTROL.

NO! I ENJOY BEING ABLE TO FIND WHO I AM OUTSIDE OF LIMBO.

BUT I ALSO CAN'T IGNORE WHAT GOES ON HERE. NOT IF IT THREATENS EARTH.

I UNDERSTAND. I WILL INVOLVE YOU EARLIER NEXT TIME. YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME HERE.

MAYBE IN THE FUTURE. BUT I MADE...

...I MADE A MISTAKE THAT ALSO *COST* SOMEONE THEIR FREEDOM. I NEED TO MAKE THAT RIGHT.

I'M ALWAYS HERE TO LEND A SHOULDER.

YOU AREN'T ALONE. I BELIEVE SCOTT AND YOUR TEAM WOULD TELL YOU SOMETHING SIMILAR.

THANKS, MADDIE. I APPRECIATE IT.

NOT THAT I DON'T MIND KNOCKING SOME SENSE INTO THE DEMONS OF LIMBO EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

ACTUALLY, I WOULDN'T MIND BEING A MORE *HANDS-ON* CONSULTANT.

I THINK WE CAN MAKE THAT WORK.

IN THIS PLACE THAT HAS BROUGHT ME SO MUCH DESPAIR, HOPE BEGINS TO BUBBLE UP...JUST AS IT DID WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

I KNOW WHAT I NEED TO DO NOW.

SOCIETY OF THE ETERNAL DAWN'S HEADQUARTERS. LOCATION UNKNOWN.

CLICK CLICK CLICK

RING

DANI MOONSTAR, IT IS SO *GOOD* TO HEAR FROM YOU. I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D CALL.

EMBODIMENT, I NEED YOUR HELP. LIMINAL WAS IMPRISONED BUT AT THE COST OF USING CAL AS A LIVING SEAL.

AH, I UNDERSTAND. I FEARED CALLEN'S BLOODLINE MIGHT BE USED AS A LAST RESORT.

OF COURSE, DEAR, YOU CAN STOP BY. MY ***HUNTERS*** ARE ALWAYS WELCOME BACK HOME.

#7

“BENEATH THE VEIL”

THE BADLANDS, SOUTH DAKOTA.

YOU'RE *SERIOUSLY* TRYING TO SNEAK UP ON ME? YOU'VE BEEN TRAILING ME FOR THE PAST MILE. NEXT TIME, *HIDE* YOUR ANGER BETTER.

YOU REALLY THOUGHT YOU COULD INFILTRATE *THE SOCIETY OF THE ETERNAL DAWN?* AT OUR HEADQUARTERS? HOW COCKY--?!

FT FT FT

THUD

ILLYANA?! WHY ARE YOU ATTACKING ME?!

ME?! *YOU* FIRED FIRST!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU FOLLOWED ME!

YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ANSWERING MY CALLS!

EVER SINCE YOU TOOK CAL, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SENSE THE TRACKING SPELL I PUT ON HIM. I'M WORRIED.

AFTER IRELAND, I BROUGHT CAL HERE. THE BASE'S DEFENSES ARE INTERFERING WITH YOUR TRACKING SPELL.

I'M SICK OF IT TOO.

I'M SORRY, 'YANA. I WAS TOO HARSH IN IRELAND. WE NEED TO TALK, BUT THAT'LL HAVE TO WAIT.

I JUST RETURNED TO BASE TODAY. SOMETHING'S WRONG.

PLEASE, DANI. I NEED TO KNOW HOW HE'S DOING. I KNOW WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING, BUT--

I'M TAKING YOU TO CAL BECAUSE I KNOW YOU'LL JUST BREAK IN ANYWAY. BUT, 'YANA, YOU *SHOULDN'T* BE HERE.

THINGS FEEL *STILTED* BETWEEN DANI AND ME. AND I DON'T THINK *EITHER* OF US KNOWS HOW TO FIX IT.

I WENT TO THE *SOCIETY* TO GET ANSWERS. HE'S AWAKE, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD SEE HIM.

LET'S SIT DOWN SO I CAN EXPLAIN--

NO. I'VE WAITED TOO LONG.

HEY, LOSERS OF THE ROUND TABLE. ARE YOU GONNA LET ME IN, OR DO I NEED TO BUST OUT MY OWN SWORD AND ARMOR?

NOK NOK

CAL! THANK GOD! YOU'RE AWAKE!

I'M SO SORRY. I SHOULD HAVE *NEVER* INVOLVED YOU WITH LIMINAL.

OH, ILLYANA...

I'VE MISSED YOU.

WHAT A SIGHT TO BEHOLD.

LIMINAL?!

WHAT HAPPENED?!

THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU.

THAT WASN'T YOUR CHOICE TO MAKE! I NEEDED TO KNOW.

I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO BLAME YOURSELF. WE HAD THIS UNDER CONTROL.

BE QUIET.

HAHA... "UNDER CONTROL"?

ILLYANA'S RITUAL TO CONTAIN ME FAILED, AND BECAUSE OF IT, I HAVE FULL CONTROL OF THIS BODY.

NO, THAT WASN'T WHAT THE SPELL SAID. THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN.

I AM NO LONGER BOUND TO MY DOMAIN. ONCE THIS BODY ADJUSTS TO MY POWERS, I WILL BE LIMITLESS.

THINK OF WHAT FUN WE'LL HAVE.

MOONSTAR...

STAND DOWN. I CAN HANDLE THIS.

ILLYANA, YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN BEFORE WE DO SOMETHING WE CAN'T TAKE BACK.

I ALMOST FEEL HUMAN AGAIN... HOW QUAINT.

SHE'S MANIFESTING THE DARKCHILD!

I TOLD YOU TO *STAND DOWN*, EXEMPLARS. SHE'S NOT A THREAT!

NEUTRALIZE LIMINAL FIRST.

RESTRAIN THE *DARKCHILD*. MODERATE DAMAGE ALLOWED.

=SIGH= I BETTER GET OVERTIME FOR THIS, YANISA.

I WON'T LET YOU KILL CAL.

THAT BOY IS NOT YOUR FRIEND, MAGIK. ONLY A *PARASITE* INSIDE A CORPSE.

YOUR *PROPHECY* WAS WRONG ABOUT THE DARKCHILD.

AND YOU'RE SURE AS *HELL* WRONG ABOUT CAL.

ENS TERA.

CRACK

GRRRR...

CLAY DOLLS? OOOH, SCARY!

YOU'RE ATTACKING ME WITH WOODEN STICKS? *HA!* DO YOU *REALLY* THINK THAT WILL DO ANYTHING?

YEAH, I *REALLY* DO.

UNGH! WHERE--?

WHAM

EVERYONE *CALM* DOWN! ILLYANA ISN'T A THREAT! YOU'RE FEEDING INTO EXACTLY WHAT LIMINAL WANTS!

I'LL BE MORE THAN A THREAT IF THEY DON'T BACK THE #$%$ DOWN.

NOT HELPING, MAGIK!

MY KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR.

OH, ILLYANA, I'M BLUSHING.

I'M PROTECTING, *CAL.* NOT YOU.

IS THERE EVEN A *DIFFERENCE* ANYMORE?

THIS HAS GONE ON LONG ENOUGH. CAL'S COMING WITH *ME*. YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE TO FIX THIS AND YOU *FAILED*.

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT, MAGIK.

SOLARIS INCANTUM.

YOU SUMMON YOUR WEAPONS THROUGH A POCKET DIMENSION.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, ASTRAL MAGIC EASILY SHUTS THAT DOOR.

FINE, LET'S PLAY WITH MAGIC.

@#%#! NOT IN CLOSED QUARTERS!

EVERYONE STOP!

MY EXEMPLARS, YOU'RE TOO QUICK TO JUMP INTO ACTION. *NO ONE* WILL WIN THIS FIGHT TODAY.

REMEMBER, ILLYANA RASPUTINA *DEFEATED* LIMINAL. SHE IS OUR *GUEST.*

WELCOME, ILLYANA, TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE ETERNAL DAWN.

I AM *THE EMBODIMENT,* LEADER OF THIS ORGANIZATION.

WHAT A *WARM* WELCOME. I HOPE YOU DIDN'T ROLL OUT THIS RED CARPET JUST FOR ME.

I *PROMISE* MY SECONDS-IN-COMMAND ARE NORMALLY NOT SO HOSTILE. HOPEFULLY, THEY'VE CALMED DOWN ENOUGH FOR INTRO-DUCTIONS.

MEET *LEXI LARSEN*, MY EXEMPLAR OF RECRUITMENT.

HIYA! HUUUUGE FAN OF YOUR WORK!

TELL HER TO STOP BEING SO FRIENDLY. IT'S UNNATURAL.

YANISA SUWAN. MY EXEMPLAR OF WEAPONRY.

CHARMED.

FINALLY, *KIAN MIR*, MY EXEMPLAR OF PROPHECY.

WE WASTE TIME, EMBODIMENT. LIMINAL IS *MORTAL*. IF HE'S DISCONNECTED FROM HIS REALM, EARTH WILL NOT UNRAVEL--

ENOUGH.

FORGIVE MY EXEMPLARS. WE'VE BEEN ON EDGE EVER SINCE CALLEN WOKE UP.

MY HUNTERS ARE STILL WARY OF DARKCHILD, BUT I *KNOW* THEY'LL COME AROUND WITH TIME. I *TRULY* APPRECIATE YOUR HELP IN DEFEATING LIMINAL.

"DEFEATING"? YOU CONSIDER *THIS* A VICTORY?

I COULDN'T CARE LESS. MY PRIORITY IS GETTING CAL BACK TO NORMAL.

HE'S NOT SAFE HERE. ESPECIALLY WITH *YOUR* EXEMPLARS.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR HESITATION AFTER THIS WHOLE...FIASCO. I *PROMISE* NO HARM WILL COME TO CAL.

OUR FULL RESOURCES ARE OPEN TO YOU. WE CAN DISCUSS NEXT STEPS IN MY OFFICE. DANI WILL ESCORT CAL THERE.

I CREATED THE TOWER BY CONFINING A FALLING STAR AND FORCING IT TO INVERT. THE STAR POWERS OUR DEFENSES AND OUR SPELL-WORK.

IMPRESSIVE, RIGHT?

HAHA, HOW *REFRESHING*. I APPRECIATE YOUR HONESTY.

NOT IN THE SLIGHTEST.

WHEN I FOUNDED THE SOCIETY, I NEVER KNEW WHAT IT WOULD TURN INTO. HOW DISPARATE GROUPS OF HUNTERS WOULD *UNITE* FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

WE'VE REVOLUTIONIZED HOW WE DEAL WITH THREATS, COMBINING TECH AND MAGIC TO PREVENT AND *CONTROL* APOCALYPSES BEFORE THEY START.

YET CAL STILL GOT HURT. HOW *IMPRESSIVE*.

THE DARKCHILD...

WHY DID THE EMBODIMENT LET *IT* IN?

BEFORE, I WOULD SHY AWAY FROM SUCH LABELS. BUT NOW?

DON'T WORRY. *SHE* IS HERE TO HELP.

AND I DON'T BITE... MUCH.

PLEASE DON'T PAY THEM ANY MIND, ILLYANA. THEY'RE PROTECTIVE OF OUR HOME.

I DON'T NEED YOUR *PITY*. IT'S WISE TO BE SCARED OF ME.

SEEING THE EMBODIMENT'S CONTROL OVER HER SOCIETY, I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK OF LIMBO AND MADDIE. OUR HANDS-OFF LEADERSHIP CAUSED SO MUCH DESTRUCTION.

MAYBE THIS WILL FINALLY IMPRESS YOU, ILLYANA.

IF I HAD CONTROLLED THE SITUATION EARLIER, WOULD LIMBO HAVE HAD ITS REBELLION?

IF I HAD CONTROLLED AND ACCEPTED DARKCHILD EARLIER, WOULD CAL HAVE GOTTEN HURT?

THE LIBRARY OF THE FATES. IT'S A NEXUS FOR PROPHETIC INFORMATION.

THE CONNECTION I FORGED WITH THE REALM ARMS MY HUNTERS WITH PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE TO PREVENT DISASTERS BEFORE THEY OCCUR.

NOT MUCH VALUE IN *FALSE* PROPHECIES.

DARKCHILD'S PROPHECY IS A ***REMNANT*** OF THE CHAOS THAT RAN WILD BEFORE I TOOK OVER. CALLEN'S GRANDMOTHER AGNES REFUSED TO PART WITH THAT JOURNAL.

BESIDES, THE PROPHECY WASN'T WRONG. IT WAS ***MISINTERPRETED***.

WELCOME TO MY OFFICE. THE *HEART* OF MY SOCIETY.

FEEL FREE TO PUT OUR RESOURCES TO GOOD WORK.

ALL THIS POWER AND FOR WHAT? KRAKOA FELL. LIMBO INVADED NEW YORK. THE VAMPIRES PLUNGED THE WORLD INTO DARKNESS. CAL'S NOW HURT.

SHOULD I GO ON?

TIME STILL MOVES, *REGARDLESS* OF HOW MUCH I WISH I COULD CONTROL IT. VARIABLES CAN BE ALTERED, BUT CONSTANTS REMAIN. I'M ONLY *HUMAN*.

YET IT SEEMS YOU HAVE *MORE* THAN ENOUGH PEOPLE UNDER YOUR CONTROL. WHO ARE THESE SCULPTURES OF?

I'M SORRY, DEAR, I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

WHAT IS THIS?! THE STATUES WERE BLANK A FEW MOMENTS AGO!

I DON'T TOLERATE THREATS. *ESPECIALLY* TO MY FRIENDS.

NO NEED TO WORRY. WITH THE STAR'S POWER, I CAN OBSERVE THE TOWER'S RESIDENTS FROM MY OFFICE. THE SCULPTURES MERELY SWITCH FROM TIME TO TIME.

BUT IT SEEMS WE'LL HAVE TO CUT OUR CONVERSATION SHORT.

BE CAREFUL!

I REFUSE TO ALLOW CAL TO BE TREATED LIKE THIS.

SLAM

IF THIS IS HOW AN ORGANIZATION TREATS ITS "GUESTS," I'D HATE TO BE A PRISONER.

YOU THINK THIS WILL BIND ME FOR LONG?! I WILL SAVOR TAKING YOU APART, PIECE BY PIECE!

UNTIL NOTHING REMAINS BUT A BLANK DOLL TO ENACT MY WILL ON THIS EARTH! YOU WILL SUFFER, AND YOU WILL THANK ME FOR IT!!!

I UNDERSTAND, DEAR. I *HATE* TO SEE HIM IN THIS STATE. IT'S LIKE ONE OF MY OWN CHILDREN BEING HURT.

I'M NOT YOUR "DEAR."

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS. I'M NOT LIKE DANI. I DON'T WANT TO BE PART OF YOUR "CLUB."

HEY--!

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO SEPARATE CAL AND LIMINAL?

EASIER SAID THAN DONE. YOUR SEALING SPELL WAS *FLAWLESS*. IT WILL TAKE TIME TO UNRAVEL THE THREADS.

THEN I'LL GET DOCTOR STRANGE INVOLVED.

OUR SOURCES TELL US THAT STRANGE IS NO LONGER IN THIS REALM. WHO KNOWS HOW LONG IT'LL BE BEFORE HE'S BACK.

WE MUST TRUST EACH OTHER. CAL IS *BLOOD*, AND THE SOCIETY PROTECTS OUR OWN.

I HAVE NO REASON TO TRUST YOU.

BUT DANI DOES. ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?

IS THAT ENOUGH? I'VE NEVER FELT SO DISCONNECTED FROM DANI BEFORE.

THERE IS A MAGICAL *ARTIFACT* THAT I BELIEVE CAN HELP SEPARATE THE TWO.

A RING IN LAS VEGAS HAS BEEN SELLING "BURN-OUTS," A DRUG THAT WILL GIVE ANYONE A POWER BOOST. IT WILL BRING ABOUT MASS CHAOS.

I BELIEVE THESE *DEALERS* ARE USING THE TRINKET TO ENHANCE THEIR PRODUCT.

DANI, I'M ASSUMING YOU WANT THE MISSION?

OF COURSE. ILLYANA AND I WILL HEAD THERE TODAY.

I'M NOT LEAVING CAL HERE. I DON'T TRUST YOU NOT TO KILL HIM IN ORDER TO GET TO LIMINAL.

HE'S COMING WITH US.

AW, ILLYANA. I'M TOUCHED.

AND LET LIMINAL INTO THE OUTSIDE WORLD? ARE YOU CRAZY--?

AH, AH, AH. LET'S PUT OURSELVES IN ILLYANA'S SHOES. I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND HER HESITATIONS.

LET US ***EARN*** YOUR TRUST, ILLYANA. LIMINAL CAN JOIN YOU UNDER ONE CONDITION...

WE'LL NEED A PHYSICAL TETHER SO THAT IF LIMINAL ESCAPES, HIS MOVEMENT AND MAGIC ARE RESTRICTED.

HOPEFULLY, IT WILL ALSO PREVENT CAL'S BODY FROM FULLY ADJUSTING TO LIMINAL'S POWERS.

HA! HOW NAIVE.

MY POWER WILL GROW. YOU CANNOT PREVENT THIS.

ILLYANA MADE A *WISH* TO HAVE ME BOUND. HER MAGIC *RESPONDED*.

A WISH LIKE THAT IS NOT SO EASILY UNDONE. JUST AS MY FIRST DOMAIN *INTERTWINED* WITH MY MAGIC, SO WILL THIS BODY.

AFTER ALL, YOUR "*SOCIETY*" CONSUMED THE CREATORS OF THAT SPELL JUST AS I'VE CONSUMED THEIR DESCENDANT.

EH?

TAP

TAP

TAP

I APPRECIATE YOUR CONFIDENCE. MAYBE I CAN'T PREVENT IT...BUT I CERTAINLY CAN *DELAY* IT.

OH, EMBODIMENT. HOW YOU WOUND ME WITH YOUR--

ECK!

BURST

COFFE COFFE

PLIP PLIP

CAL!

NOT TO WORRY. THIS MAGIC SPELL DOESN'T *TRULY* HARM CAL'S BODY.

HAHA... I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD THE NERVE. YOU'LL REGRET THAT.

DOESN'T HARM HIM?! YOU TORE HIS HEART OUT!

I'M SORRY, ILLYANA. BUT I *ASSURE* YOU--

--ENSURING PEACE IS ALL ABOUT *CONTROL*, MY DEAR.

THUMP...

THUMP

THUMP

#8

"FRAYED NOT BROKEN"

HIGH ROLLER.
LAS VEGAS,
NEVADA.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS ALREADY.

FROM THE *MOMENT* I MET YOU, I KNEW I COULDN'T PICTURE MY LIFE WITHOUT YOU.

BELLA, WOULD YOU MAKE ME THE *HAPPIEST* MAN ALIVE AND MARRY ME?

OH, EDDIE. *YES!* OF COURSE, YES!

EDDIE!!!

CONGRATS, YOU TWO! THROUGH THE GOOD AND THE **BAD**, RIGHT?

YOU ARE A *HARD* MAN TO TRACK DOWN, EDDIE. I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER TOWN FOR YOU.

WHO SENT YOU?!

BANG

BANG

HEY, DUMMY, YOU REALLY THINK A GUN WILL HOLD UP AGAINST MY STEPPING DISCS?

THINGS LIKE THIS TEND TO HAPPEN WHEN YOU'RE A MEMBER OF YOUR LOCAL DRUG RING.

TELL ME WHERE THE *SCARLET EYE'S* BASE IS AND YOU CAN GET BACK TO YOUR HAPPY, LITTLE PROPOSAL.

LIKE I WOULD BELIEVE THAT.

THUD

TRUE, YOUR FIANCÉE *PROBABLY* ISN'T HAPPY. BAD CHOICE OF WORDS.

YOU'LL *PAY* FOR THIS!

RUDE! I'M DOING YOU A *FAVOR.*

BANG

BANG

CHK

CHK

JUST THINK! IT'LL BE A NIGHT SHE *ALWAYS* REMEMBERS.

SO, AM I INVITED TO THE WEDDING?

AGHHHH! LET ME GO!

SYAWNE WHY ARE WE WASTING TIME WITH THIS?

YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY THINK THAT THIS MAN KNOWS THE LOCATION OF ZOSIMOS' QUILL, ILLYANA.

THE EMBODIMENT SEEMS TO THINK THEY'RE USING IT TO CREATE THEIR POWER ENHANCERS.

AND YOU *TRUST* HER? TEARING OUT MY HEART AND ACTING LIKE EVERYTHING'S FINE DOESN'T SCREAM SOUND OF MIND.

THAT'S RICH COMING FROM YOU. I DON'T AGREE WITH HER MEANS, BUT THE QUILL'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET CAL BACK.

ITS GEM MODIFIES BOTH THE *PHYSICAL* AND *META-PHYSICAL*, BUT THERE'S NO REASON TO SUSPECT THIS MAN KNOWS ITS LOCATION.

CAL'S SOUL IS DEAD. BY USING THE GEM TO RESTORE MY ORIGINAL FORM, YOU'D BE LEAVING THIS BODY A HUSK.

AURGH!

SIZZZ

MAGICAL BINDINGS GIVING YOU SOME TROUBLE? THEY TEND TO *FLARE* UP WHEN YOU USE YOUR POWERS, BUT FEEL *FREE* TO TEST IT OUT AGAIN.

WAS THAT LITTLE *MONOLOGUE* REALLY WORTH USING YOUR POWERS, LIMINAL?

INCREDIBLY.

I KNOW CAL'S STILL IN THERE.

REALLY? ENLIGHTEN ME.

ENOUGH! ILLYANA, WE CAN'T RISK LOSING THE WAREHOUSE'S LOCATION!

FROM ONE INTERROGATION TO THE NEXT, DANI.

AW, I *REALLY* DID ENJOY OUR CHAT.

IGNORE HIM... HOWEVER HARD IT MIGHT BE.

YOUR COLLEAGUES HAVEN'T BEEN WILLING TO TALK. I THOUGHT I'D TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS TIME. SOMETHING ***MAGICAL***.

AENDRET WORMS BURROW THEIR WAY IN, GORGING THEMSELVES ON CONSCIOUS THOUGHT UNTIL YOU CAN'T DISCERN UP FROM DOWN. I'VE HEARD IT'S A VERY PAINFUL PROCESS.

NFFF!

OPEN UP.

HOW CREATIVE.

DO YOU HAVE A BETTER IDEA? *ENLIGHTEN* ME.

I COULD HELP YOU, ILLYANA. REMOVE MY BINDINGS AND LET ME PARSE OUT THE LOCATION OF THE GEM.

MAKE *ANOTHER* DEAL WITH YOU? *PLEASE*. THE SOCIETY BOUND YOU FOR A REASON.

THE SOCIETY IS *CORRUPT* AND FEARS WHAT THEY CANNOT CONTROL. WHY ELSE AM I BOUND? WHY ELSE ARE THEY TRYING TO BIND YOU?

THEY BOUND YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE A *THREAT*. I'M NOT.

THAT'S *NEVER* BEEN TRUE, ILLYANA.

ENOUGH, LIMINAL. YOU LOST. GET OVER IT.

ILLYANA, LET'S GO. YOUR EMPTY THREAT SCARED HIM AND I WAS ABLE TO GET A LOCATION.

WHO SAID IT WAS AN EMPTY THREAT?

HQ OF THE SCARLET EYE.

THE GUARD'S UNARMED. THEY'LL NEVER SEE OUR AMBUSH COMING.

WE'LL LEAVE LIMINAL HERE. I DON'T WANT ANY EXTRA *COMPLICATIONS*, ESPECIALLY WITH CAL'S PHYSICAL *SAFETY* AT STAKE.

NO. WHY WOULD WE LET LIMINAL HAVE ANY FREEDOM? WAIT...

YOU *STILL* THINK I'M PUTTING CAL IN DANGER!

NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT! I THOUGHT WE PUT THAT STUPID FIGHT IN IRELAND BEHIND US, ILLYANA! I'M ALLOWED TO MAKE MISTAKES.

WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

ENOUGH. IT DOESN'T MATTER. LET'S JUST GET THIS OVER WITH--

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

I'M WAITING FOR YOU TWO TO FINISH YOUR CONVERSATION.

DO YOU THINK I'M AN IDIOT? I LITERALLY JUST SAW YOU *DRAW* SOMETHING! WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

I DIDN'T DRAW ANYTHING. WHY WOULD I LIE ABOUT THIS?

WHY, INDEED. I *KNOW* THIS IS ANOTHER *TRICK* FROM LIMINAL. ANOTHER WAY TO GET UNDER MY SKIN.

WE'RE NOT LEAVING HIM OUT HERE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. WE CAN'T TRUST HIM.

WE NEED TO FIND THE QUILL. I DOUBT THEY HAVE IT OUT FRONT.

PERFECT, LET'S CLEAR THIS ROOM OUT. YOU TAKE LEFT, I TAKE RIGHT?

NOT TO QUESTION YOUR... JUDGMENT, ILLYANA, BUT THIS SEEMS TOO EASY.

YOU WON'T MAKE ME QUESTION MYSELF AGAIN. YOU JUST DON'T WANT US TO SEPARATE YOU FROM CAL'S BODY.

I'M WOUNDED. DON'T YOU TRUST ME?

NO.

FT

FT

FT

THUD

DISGUSTING!

OOZZ

WELCOME HOME!

WELCOME HOME!

WELCOME HOME!

IS THIS WHERE I SAY I TOLD YOU SO?

DANI, WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE GOONS?! WHAT ARE WE SEEING?

IT'S AN *ILLUSION.* BUT I CAN'T TELL IF IT'S PSYCHIC OR *MAGICAL* IN NATURE.

THIS IS THE LAST PLACE YOU'LL EVER SEE.

FUNNY. CAN YOU BACK THAT UP?

I THINK THEY'LL TRY. KINDA SAD.

ARE ALL HUMANS THIS PREDICTABLE? HOW DULL.

FINISH THIS UP QUICKLY FOR ME, ILLYANA. I'D HATE FOR US TO WASTE TOO MUCH TIME.

I DON'T TAKE *ORDERS* FROM YOU, LIMINAL.

!

SWAM!!!

I CAN'T TRUST MY SENSES. THE SCARLET EYE ARE *CONTROLLING* THIS DOMAIN-- CONTROLLING WHAT I *SEE*.

ARE THESE ENEMIES EVEN *REAL*?

OR ARE MORE HIDING IN THE *SHADOWS*?

MAGIK! *PUSH* FORWARD AND I'LL COVER YOU FROM BEHIND.

MIRAGE, CIRCLE BACK AND *REGROUP*.

PUSH FORWAR ARE YO *CRAZY*?

ME?! *WHY* WOULD WE REGROUP? WE CAN'T GIVE THEM TIME TO BREATHE!

WHACK

NIGHT NIGHT.

SLOW THEM DOWN, ILLYANA! MAKE THEM PLAY YOUR GAME!

ANITSEF.

PERFECT.

UGH. I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED. SO ANNOYING.

DANI, WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS?

THIS IS YOUR EXPERTISE, 'YANA. WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

WHAT--?

BLOCK THEIR SENSES. TAKE AWAY THEIR MEANS OF SIGHT.

I--

YOU DON'T GIVE ORDERS HERE. JUST BECAUSE YOUR PLAN WORKED *ONCE* DOESN'T MEAN IT'LL WORK AGAIN.

THEN *WHY* AM I FOLLOWING LIMINAL'S LEAD? *WHY* CAN'T DANI AND I FALL INTO SYNC?

I CAN'T HOLD THESE STEPPING DISCS FOR LONG. WE NEED A PLAN AND FAST.

I'LL FOLLOW *YOUR* LEAD, DANI. I CAN'T STAND THIS WEIRD DISCONNECT ANYMORE.

'YANA, NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT--

ENOUGH. WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS EMOTION.

LET ME *FINISH!* 'YANA, YOU'RE THE MAGICAL EXPERT. WHAT ARE YOU SEEING?

WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THIS ILLUSION.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

WE NEED TO OVERLAY OUR *OWN REALITY* TO FIGHT IN. SOMETHING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO *CRASH* THEIR ILLUSION.

I THINK I CAN BE OF HELP.

IF WE'RE ALL "*OPENING UP*" TO EACH OTHER, I HAVE A *CONFESSION.*

DANI, YOU MANIFEST FEARS, NO? WELL, MY BIGGEST FEAR IS BEING TRAPPED. I WOULD *HATE* GOING BACK TO MY REALM.

I CAN WORK WITH THAT.

COME ON, MEN. LET'S TAKE THIS HOME.

PUSH THE BARRIER--

WHAT THE--?!

YOU *PROBABLY* SHOULDN'T HAVE TRAPPED US IN HERE WITH YOU. THAT WAS A *MISTAKE*.

OH WELL. MORE *FUN* FOR US. WELCOME TO *LIMINAL'S* DOMAIN.

WHAT DO WE DO?!

WHAT IS THIS?!

SHE'S--

I DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR--

MEN! *GROUP* UP, DON'T LET THEM SEPARATE US.

AAAAHHHH!!!

AAAAAIEEEE!

THEY'RE PICKING US OFF ONE BY ONE. STAY STRONG AND HOLD YOUR--

SHHHHH... YOU'RE WASTING AIR.

WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!

NOOOOOO!

DON'T LET GO! PLEASE DON'T LET--

--

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO...

HI THERE.

SHOOT, HE *PASSED* OUT. NO ONE CAN HANDLE A LITTLE *FUN* NOWADAYS.

VERY *FEW* PEOPLE CAN KEEP UP WITH YOU, 'YANA. TAKE IT AS A *COMPLIMENT.*

DANI, WE NEED TO TALK. WE CAN'T FIGHT IN THE FIELD LIKE THIS.

I AGREE. I FEEL SO GUILTY. THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.

NO, IT'S NOT--

I'M PROUD THAT YOU VIEW ME AS A LEADER, BUT I'M STILL HUMAN. I HAVE MY EMOTIONS, JUST LIKE YOU.

I'M SORRY. I WAS TOO HARSH WITH YOU. WE WERE BOTH IN AN EMOTIONAL PLACE AND I LET THAT GET THE BETTER OF ME.

SEEING CAL IN THAT POSITION REMINDED ME OF WHEN WE WERE *KIDS.* LIVING WITH THE NEW MUTANTS WAS GREAT. BUT I WAS CONSTANTLY TASKED WITH *PROTECTING* OUR TEAM.

WE WERE *KIDS,* 'YANA.

YOU DIDN'T *MEAN* FOR CAL TO GET HURT. THAT WASN'T *FAIR* TO BLAME YOU.

I JUST DON'T WANT US TO REPEAT THE SAME CYCLE OVER AND OVER AGAIN. BECOME THE ADULTS WHO WOULD--

YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN. I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU DID FOR US BACK THEN. EVERYTHING YOU DID FOR ME.

BELIEVE ME, I *UNDERSTAND* HOW HARD IT IS TO DEAL WITH OUR PASTS.

I'M SORRY FOR SHUTTING MYSELF OFF. I'M WORKING ON *GROWING* PAST THAT TRIGGER. ON *OPENING* MYSELF UP AGAIN. YOU MAKE THAT *EASY,* DANI.

HOW SWEET. YOU'RE WELCOME, BY THE WAY. I HOPE MY ASSISTANCE HAS STARTED TO EARN YOUR TRUST.

NO.

÷SNORT÷ JINX.

YOU CAN'T DENY THAT WE MAKE A GREAT TEAM, ILLYANA. WE COULD BE UNSTOPPABLE.

THREE STEPS FORWARD, FOUR STEPS BACK. AND HERE I *THOUGHT* WE WERE GETTING SOMEWHERE.

YOU STOLE VETIVER FROM THEIR TABLE. WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO WITH THIS?

NOT EVERYTHING IS ABOUT *YOU*, ILLYANA. I HAVE MORE *IMPORTANT* THINGS TO DEAL WITH.

LIKE REMOVING YOUR MAGICAL BINDINGS?

THAT AMONG A FEW OTHER THINGS.

THE TOP ITEM AT MIND IS WHY WE WERE SENT ON A SUICIDE MISSION.

PERSONALLY, I'M *FLATTERED* THAT THE SOCIETY VIEW ME AS SUCH A THREAT. BUT FOR YOU TWO? NOT THE BEST WAY TO *RETAIN* NEW TALENT.

HE'S NOT WRONG, DANI.

IF I WERE LEADING THIS MISSION DURING KRAKOA, OUR TEAM WOULD HAVE BEEN TWICE AS BIG.

I DON'T DISAGREE. I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE EMBODIMENT WHEN WE GET BACK.

BUT FIRST, LET'S FIND THE SOURCE OF THIS ILLUSION...

AFTER YOU.

BEEP BEEP

NO, NO, NO, NO. YOU'RE *NOT* REAL. YOU CAN'T BE REAL. I *CAN'T* BE REAL.

THE *DEAL* WAS MADE. OR *WILL* BE MADE. OR *WAS* IT EVER MADE?

WHO ARE YOU? WHO GAVE YOU THESE WEAPONS?

NO, NO. YOU *SHOULDN'T* BE HERE. I *SHOULDN'T* BE HERE.

THIS IS *POINTLESS.* HE'S NOT MAKING ANY SENSE.

THIS IS A LONG SHOT, BUT LET ME TRY TO CREATE A PSYCHIC PROJECTION THAT WILL SOOTHE HIM.

BUT HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S FRAYING AT THE SEAMS.

I'VE SMOOTHED THINGS OVER, BUT BE GENTLE. IT COULD *BREAK* AT ANY MOMENT.

UNDERSTOOD.

I'LL ASK NICELY ONE LAST TIME--WHO ARE YOU, AND WHO GAVE YOU THESE WEAPONS?

NO ONE. I BUILT THESE.

I BUILT THIS FORTRESS. I WILL *NOT* BE TAKEN BACK.

MY MENTAL AUGMENTATION WAS PERFECT. *THEY* WERE MEANT TO BE *TRAPPED* IN MY LABYRINTH. *THEY* COULDN'T ESCAPE AND I'D BE FREE.

MY INFORMANTS TOLD ME THAT *THEY* WERE FINALLY IN VEGAS. I LURED YOU HERE SO I COULD *KILL* YOU BEFORE YOU COULD KILL ME.

DIDN'T WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT? *THEY* LEFT ME ALONE FOR SO LONG.

DANI, HE STILL ISN'T MAKING ANY SENSE. WHO ARE "*THEY*"?

YOU ALREADY KNOW.

REMEMBER, I'VE NEVER LIED TO YOU, ILLYANA. I'VE BEEN *HELPFUL* THIS ENTIRE MISSION. I'VE PLAYED BY "*THEIR*" RULES.

NOW DO YOU *FINALLY* TRUST ME?

I DON'T. I DON'T TRUST LIMINAL. BUT I *KNOW* HE IS RIGHT ABOUT THIS.

THIS IS *SOCIETY* TECH. THE ONLY WAY YOU'D HAVE IT IS IF YOU ARE--OR *WERE*-- A MEMBER.

THEY SENT US TO TAKE YOU OUT.

WE CAN'T BE RASH.

WE WERE SENT ON A SUICIDE MISSION. WAS THIS BAD INTEL, OR DOES THE ROT EXTEND TO THE ENTIRE SOCIETY ITSELF?

THE SCARLET EYE ARE ALL DEFECTORS. BUT WHY DIDN'T THE SOCIETY COME AFTER THEM SOONER?

WE AREN'T ALLOWED TO STRAY FOR LONG. I AM A *GHOST*, A *DESERTER*.

THEY ARE TRYING TO *ERASE* ME IN BOTH NAME AND SOUL. THEY *FEED* MY NAME TO THEIR STAR AND I SLOWLY UNRAVEL.

I THOUGHT TAKING THIS QUILL WOULD STOP--

BANG

SHOOT. YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE GONE BY NOW. *UGH.*

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE US TO DO WITH THEM, MS. LARSEN?

PLEASE, LEXI'S FINE. SOMETIMES IT'S ***SUCH*** A PAIN TO BE A SOCIETY EXEMPLAR. BUT SOMEONE HAS TO UPHOLD THE RULES AND POLICY *IS* POLICY.

WE CAN'T HAVE ANY ***SURVIVORS.***

#9

"ABOVE ALL"

LAS VEGAS STRIP, NEVADA.

IT'S ONLY BEEN A MINUTE SINCE WE TELEPORTED OUT OF THE SCARLET EYE'S WAREHOUSE AND OUT OF LEXI'S GRASP.

IN ANY OTHER INSTANCE, WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SAFE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE *ARCANE* COMPLICATES THINGS.

TELEPORTATION ISN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE. YOU *ONLY* BOUGHT YOURSELF A MINUTE. I HOPE YOU PUT YOUR FINAL MOMENTS TO GOOD USE.

BECAUSE...

...I FOUND YOU!

PRŒLIUŽ

FINALLY, WE GET TO DO SOMETHING FUN.

VIVA LAS VEGAS

YOU HAVE A QUESTIONABLE DEFINITION OF FUN, ILLYANA.

BOOM

ROOAR

THE ARROWS DIDN'T WORK! SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH MY BOW!

YA REALLY THOUGHT WE'D GIVE WEAPONS TO NEW RECRUITS WITHOUT SAFEGUARDS?

YA FAILED YOUR PROBATIONARY PERIOD, KID.

TK

ILLYANA. REMOVE THE BINDINGS ON MY MAGIC.

I WILL UNRAVEL THE WARDS ON DAWN PIERCER WHILE YOU BUY US TIME.

OH NOOOOO. LIMINAL SAYS YOU'RE DEFENSELESS, DANI. *WHATEVER* WILL YOU DO?

I THINK MY *PSYCHIC BOW* AND I WILL MANAGE.

I BET THAT I CAN KILL THE DRAGONS FASTER THAN YOU CAN KNOCK OUT THE SOCIETY'S GOONS.

OH, YOU'RE ON.

FT FT FT

HIYA, SNAKE FACE. LET'S MAKE THIS QUICK.

DANI'S NOT WINNING ANOTHER BET.

@&%#!

SKREEEEOH

FWOOSH

OH, NOW I'M PISSED.

BARELY MANAGED TO TELEPORT AWAY IN TIME USING MY STEPPING DISCS.

I'M NOT LOSING AN EYEBROW TODAY.

SHHUNTT

SCREEEECH

BLURP

THREE.

SNRL

TWO.

ONE.

HSSSS

SLAM

FRAXIOM.

ST ST ST

BURST

GRAB

AH-AH-AH...

IS THE PRINCESS IN THE TOWER RUNNING AWAY? HOW RUDE.

BUT YOU'RE NO PRINCESS.

CRACK

AND I'M NO KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR.

LOOKS LIKE I WON. *AGAIN.*

WHAT DEMON DID *YOU* MAKE A DEAL WITH?

ONLY YOU, 'YANA. AND I'M HERE TO COLLECT MY WINNINGS.

I'LL LET YOU OFF EASY. DE-WARD DAWN PIERCER FOR ME.

HOW FAR DO WE THINK THIS CORRUPTION SPREADS?

YANISA GAVE ME THIS BOW. IT COULD BE ALL THE EXEMPLARS. HELL, IT COULD BE THE ENTIRE SOCIETY.

WE HAVE TO GET CAL'S HEART BACK. THEY'LL USE HIS "DOG LEASH" TO COME AFTER US.

I'M NO DOG.

YOU'RE RIGHT. A DOG'S MORE LIKABLE. YOU'RE LIKE A PET WITHOUT THE FUN.

THE BADLANDS, SOUTH DAKOTA.

AND ONE WE UNFORTUNATELY HAVE TO TAKE BACK TO THE POUND.

NO RED CARPET? I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO A GUNFIGHT.

HOSPITALITY TRULY IS DEAD.

EVERY-ONE'S OUT ON MISSIONS.

OR NO ONE KNOWS WE'RE PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE.

DON'T THINK ABOUT RUNNING, LIMINAL. WE'RE YOUR ONLY PROTECTION HERE.

I'M JUST ADMIRING THE BASE'S CREATION. INVERTING A STAR IS IMPRESSIVE ENOUGH MAGIC.

BUT, FACTORING IN HYDROSTATIC EQUILIBRIUM... YOU'D HAVE TO BALANCE *INWARD* AND *OUTWARD* PRESSURE.

WHAT ARE YOU ON ABOUT? I DON'T NEED A SCIENCE LECTURE.

FOR A MOMENT, HE *ALMOST* SOUNDED LIKE--

THERE'S OUR WARM WELCOME.

LET'S MOVE, DANI!

WATCH IT!

WHAT THE--?!

DISENGAGE. THIS IS JUST A DRILL.

A "DRILL"? *PERFECT*, YANISA. I LOVE WHEN THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES FOR LETTING LOOSE.

THEY'RE TRYING TO KEEP THE COUP FROM THE REST OF THE HUNTERS.

WE'VE ANSWERED OUR QUESTION. LEADERSHIP ISN'T HAPPY WITH US.

WHO COULD HAVE SEEN THAT COMING?

KNOCK, KNOCK. WE'RE BACK.

NOT ONE MORE STEP.

HER BACK IS TURNED. I CAN ENCHANT THE CLAY--

KIAN, BIND ILLYANA'S HANDS.

I DIDN'T EVEN FINISH MY THOUGHT--

I HAVE A GIFT FOR *PREMONITION*. ANY BODY MOVEMENT OF YOURS TRIGGERS IT. I KNOW WHAT YOUR NEXT MOVE IS BEFORE YOU EVEN DO.

"GIFT"?

OH, DON'T PLAY *COY*, ILLYANA. WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE A BETTER TACTICIAN THAN YOU LET ON.

YOU'VE BEEN WEARING US DOWN. USING US TO TAKE OUT YOUR ENEMIES BEFORE YOU DISPOSE OF US.

YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO PLAN FOR EVERY ANGLE. THAT *CERTAINTY* DOESN'T COME FROM SOME *RANDOM* PROPHECIES.

SHE'S A *MUTANT*.

WHAT?! WHY WOULD SHE NOT TELL ME?

I WANTED TO, DANI, BUT I NEEDED TO TRUST YOU. PROTECTING OTHERS REQUIRES PERSONAL SACRIFICE. *REGARDLESS* OF HOW IT LOOKS.

MUTANTS ARE USED TO IGNORING PUBLIC *PERCEPTION*. IT'S RARELY EVER CORRECT.

ACTIONS MATTER MORE THAN WORDS.

EXACTLY. WHICH IS WHY I'M OFFERING YOU A *TRUCE*. STEP ASIDE AND YOUR *POTENTIAL* HERE COULD BE LIMITLESS.

AFTER ALL, THERE'S AN OPENING FOR AN *EXEMPLAR*.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

I DO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT TAKES TO LEAD A TEAM... AND I THINK I'LL HAVE TO PASS ON YOUR OFFER.

YOU MAKE FOR A LOUSY LEADER.

A LEADER LETS THEIR PEOPLE GROW. YOU RIP OUT THEIR ROOTS.

THAT'S NOT A WORLDVIEW I WANT TO FOLLOW. I *ACCEPT* MY PEOPLE--MY FRIENDS--FOR WHO THEY ARE IN FULL.

DANI'S A GREAT TEAM LEADER. I PREFER TO *KNOCK* SENSE INTO MY PEOPLE. AND IT'S OBVIOUS YOU NEED SOME OF MY GUIDANCE, EMBODIMENT.

I'D BE HAPPY TO HELP WITH THAT FREE OF CHARGE.

A *TRUE* LEADER UPHOLDS HER MISSION REGARDLESS OF COST, DANI. SIDING WITH ILLYANA WILL BE YOUR DOWNFALL--

--WILL BE THE *WORLD'S* DOWNFALL. I *REFUSE* TO LET THAT HAPPEN.

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY, RHODE ISLAND, 1885.

"BEFORE THE SOCIETY, SECTS OF MAGICIANS OPERATED IN AMERICA. EACH SECT CLAIMED A DIFFERENT AREA OF THE COUNTRY, EACH WITH THEIR OWN *UNIQUE* GOALS.

"I WAS *LUCKY* ENOUGH TO BE BORN INTO THE *SEVENTHS*.

"OUR SECT FOCUSED ON *ADVANCING* HUMANITY AND *PRESERVING* ITS SURVIVAL BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY.

"WHILE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION FOCUSED ON THE *SCIENTIFIC*, THE SEVENTHS FOCUSED ON THE *MAGICAL*.

HAVE YOU BEEN GIVING YOUR PARENTS TROUBLE, ELOISE?

NEVER.

"I HAD ALWAYS BEEN AN *ANXIOUS* CHILD. MY PARENTS TRIED TO REMEDY THIS BY MAKING SURE I KNEW I WAS LOVED.

"BUT GROWING UP IN A MAGICAL CONCLAVE TAUGHT ME THAT THE MONSTERS UNDER MY BED WERE REAL.

"ONE NIGHT, I KNEW THE *KNOT* IN MY STOMACH WAS DIFFERENT. A *WARNING* OF INCOMING DANGER.

"I HAD MANAGED TO SAVE MY FATHER FROM A HUNTING ACCIDENT.

DADDY, STOP!

BANG

"AT THE TIME, WE DIDN'T HAVE A WORD FOR *MUTANTS*. BUT EVEN AT THAT AGE, I KNEW THAT I HAD BECOME SOMETHING *UNNATURAL*.

DON'T BE SCARED, ELOISE. I THOUGHT THE FIRST TIME WAS LUCK... BUT YOU SAVED ME AGAIN.

YOU HAVE A GIFT. THIS POWER IS A BLESSING.

YOU'RE GOING TO *CHANGE* THE WORLD.

"MY FATHER WAS A GOOD MAN. BUT HE WAS NAIVE.

"HE IMMEDIATELY BROUGHT ME TO OUR LEADER, CLEMENT, TO SHOW OFF MY SUPPOSED *'MAGIC.'* CLEMENT KNEW BETTER.

IT'S NOT MAGIC, JAMES. THE FIFTHS REPORTED SOMETHING *SIMILAR* WITH ONE OF THEIR CHILDREN. IT'S IN HER *BLOOD*.

WHY WOULD WE NOT NURTURE ELOISE'S GIFTS? WE WANT TO BETTER HUMANITY!

YES, THE SEVENTHS WANT TO ADVANCE *HUMANITY*. THAT DISGUSTING *ABOMINATION* DOESN'T COUNT.

YOU'RE *LUCKY* WE'RE NOT KILLING HER ON THE SPOT. HER LIFE WILL HAVE *PURPOSE*. SHE'LL BE SEDATED AND *SAFE*.

RUN, ELOISE!

"I FELT NO FEAR WHILE I WAS WITH MY FATHER. I BELIEVED HE COULD PROTECT ME.

"HE WAS A TALENTED SWORDSMAN--MY FIRST TEACHER.

"BUT CLEMENT WAS *HIS*.

DADDY! *DADDY!*

"I DIDN'T KNOW IT, BUT SEEING MY FATHER FOR *ONE* LAST TIME WAS A BLESSING.

"EVEN AS HE SLOWLY *BLED* OUT.

"THE THINGS I WOULD BE FORCED TO WITNESS WOULD ONLY GET *WORSE.*

"THE SEVENTHS HOOKED ME UP TO A MAGICAL ARRAY, USING ME TO *TEST* POTENTIAL ACTIONS' EFFECTS ON THE *FUTURE.*

"I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS REAL OR WHAT WAS A DREAM.

"AT A CERTAIN POINT, I STOPPED CARING.

"AFTER ALL, I COULDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.

MOM?

I'M HERE, BABY. I'M SORRY IT TOOK ME SO LONG TO FIND YOU.

"MY FATHER HADN'T TOLD MY MOTHER BEFORE HE TOOK ME TO CLEMENT. BUT SHE NEVER STOPPED TRYING TO FIND ME.

"I DIDN'T CONTEMPLATE *WHY* MY LAST VISION WAS OF MY MOTHER. OUR LEADERS DIDN'T CARE ABOUT SARAH BENNETT.

"I WOULD SOON REALIZE THAT MY MOTHER USED THE MACHINE--*MY POWER*--TO SEE HOW SHE COULD SAVE HER DAUGHTER.

"I HAD *WITNESSED* MY MOTHER'S DEMISE WITHOUT *KNOWING.*

"BEING HOOKED UP TO THEIR RITUAL FOR SO MANY YEARS, MY BODY WAS SLOWLY SHUTTING DOWN WITHOUT THEIR POTIONS IN MY SYSTEM.

I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.

HANG ON, BABY.

STAND DOWN, SARAH. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY OUT OF THIS.

BOOM

"MY MOTHER KNEW THE SACRIFICE SHE'D HAVE TO MAKE.

"SOME BELIEVE MAGIC IS AN *EQUAL* TRANSFER. A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

"THE COST IS FAR MORE *SELFISH*.

"USING HER REMAINING LIFE FORCE, MY MOTHER TRANSFERRED CLEMENT'S LIFE TO ME, SLOWING MY AGING SO I WOULD SURVIVE.

"I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO SAY *GOODBYE*.

YOU...YOU CAUSED ALL OF THIS.

YOU AND YOUR...YOUR *MUTANT* KIN WERE ALWAYS THE *EMBODIMENT* OF THE END.

"IT WAS ONLY FAIR THAT CLEMENT *CHRISTENED* ME WITH A NEW NAME. AFTER ALL, MY *FREEDOM* HAD COME AT THE *EXPENSE* OF EVERYONE AROUND ME.

"EVERYONE WANTED ME TO CHANGE THE WORLD. THAT MISSION KEPT ME GOING.

"NOW, OUT OF THE MACHINE, I HAD THE POWER TO AFFECT REALITY. I *FORGED* MYSELF INTO A WEAPON TO HONOR MY PARENTS' CAUSE.

"HOWEVER, I KNEW NO ONE WOULD TRUST ME BECAUSE OF MY *TAINTED*, MUTANT BLOOD. I HAD TO FORM AN ORGANIZATION OF MY OWN.

"GATHERING TOOLS TO SUPPORT MY MISSION.

"INCLUDING THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD *SERVE* AS MY GREATEST ASSETS.

"IT TOOK ME ONE HUNDRED YEARS TO BUILD MY SOCIETY. A PALE IMITATION OF THE VIBRANCY OF THE SEVENTHS.

"THE SEVENTHS AND MY FAMILY WERE DESTROYED BECAUSE I WASN'T ABLE TO ACCEPT MY FATE AND MAKE THE SACRIFICES NEEDED.

"I DON'T WANT YOU TO REPEAT MY MISTAKES, DANI.

"YOU CONCERN YOURSELF TOO MUCH WITH *EXTERNAL* PERCEPTION. YOU TRY TO ENSURE YOU *APPEAR* LIKE THE HERO, DANI, INSTEAD OF ACTUALLY DOING WHAT'S RIGHT.

"EVEN IF IT MAKES YOU LOOK LIKE A VILLAIN.

"THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WARN YOU IN ADVANCE ABOUT KRAKOA."

YOU *KNEW*?! YOU KNEW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO KRAKOA?!

I JOINED YOU TO PREVENT ANOTHER GENOCIDE, AND YOU LET OUR PEOPLE DIE!

PEOPLE?! THEY ARE NOT "MY PEOPLE." I SERVE THE WORLD--NOT ONE POPULATION.

KRAKOA WAS NOT WORTH THE RESOURCES IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN TO SAVE. YOU WOULD HAVE PLUNGED THE WORLD INTO WAR JUST TO SAVE A FEW.

YOU ARE *BLINDED* BY YOUR ATTACHMENTS.

I COULD SAY THE SAME TO YOU.

YOU'RE SO ATTACHED TO YOUR SO-CALLED MISSION THAT YOU MISS THE ROT THAT HAS CREPT UP.

...

WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOU TWO? HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS?

IT'S *FAR* TOO LATE FOR THAT!

I'M *DONE* WITH THESE TEMPER TANTRUMS. *COME* HERE.

AECK!

I HAVE HIS HEART. HIS LIFE IS UNDER MY CONTROL.

THAT WASN'T SO HARD, WAS IT?

YOU ARE TOO MUCH OF A RISK TO LET LIVE. AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE, YOU *HAVE* TO KNOW THIS, ILLYANA.

WE CAN ENSURE A PAINLESS EXECUTION. YOU DID HELP US STOP LIMINAL.

STOP ME?

AAAH!!

I REMOVED LIMINAL'S BINDINGS BEFORE WE EVEN STEPPED FOOT IN THE BUILDING. WE'RE NOT LEAVING WITHOUT CAL'S HEART.

WHAT USE IS PREMONITION IF YOU'RE BLINDED BY YOUR OWN *SUPERIORITY?*

AND NOW FOR MY FAVORITE PART.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE. A *HEART* FOR A HEART.

YANISA.

YOU CAN'T FIGHT US. YANISA AND KIAN CAN SEE THROUGH YOUR TRICKS.

I HAVE HUNDREDS OF ***HUNTERS.*** A HUNDRED YEARS OF STOCKPILING ***WEAPONS.*** YOU WILL HAVE TO ASCEND THROUGH ***MY*** FORTRESS--EACH FLOOR MORE GUARDED THAN THE LAST.

LET ME MAKE THIS CLEAR. IF YOU RUN, YOU WON'T MAKE IT OUT OF THE FRONT DOOR.

THUD

OR YOU CAN MAKE THE SMART CHOICE AND TURN YOURSELVES IN. WHAT WILL IT BE?

VIOLENCE OR PEACE?

VIOLENCE IT IS.

#10

"TO WHAT END"

IT'S BEEN AN HOUR SINCE THE EMBODIMENT STARTED HER WAR OF ATTRITION.

DANI, LIMINAL AND I COULD EASILY HANDLE TWICE THIS MANY HUNTERS.

BUT THIS BUILDING IS A *MAZE* FILLED WITH MORE HUNTERS AT EVERY TURN.

HOW MUCH LONGER CAN YOU KEEP GOING?

HEADQUARTERS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE ETERNAL DAWN.

AS LONG AS WE NEED.

WELL, I CAN'T. IN FACT, I'M GROWING BORED OF THIS.

IF WE'RE AT WAR, IT'S ONLY FAIR I SUMMON MY DEMONIC ARMY.

LIMINAL, DID YOU IGNORE ME WHEN I SAID TELEPORTATION IS BLOCKED INSIDE THE BASE?!

OH PLEASE, ILLYANA. JUST BECAUSE *YOUR* STEPPING DISCS DON'T WORK DOESN'T MEAN EVERYONE IS *POWERLESS*.

=CHOKE=

IN FACT, I WOULD SAY IT'S QUITE THE OPPOSITE.

HOW I DO *DESPISE* BRUTE FORCE. OH WELL.

NO! NON-LETHAL FORCE ONLY!

I *REFUSE* TO LET YOU PUT ANY DEATHS ON CAL'S CONSCIENCE.

DO YOU REALLY HAVE A CHOICE? WOULD YOU RATHER THE BOY BE *DEAD* HIMSELF?

WE WILL NOT SURVIVE THIS NIGHT IF YOU DO NOT TRUST ME.

THE ONLY THING I TRUST IS THAT YOU WANT TO STAY ALIVE.

DO NOT PRETEND YOUR *OWN* MOTIVES ARE UNSELFISH, ILLYANA. IF YOU TURNED YOURSELF IN RIGHT NOW, THIS ENTIRE FIGHT WOULD *STOP*.

YOU ARE LEVERAGING MY POWER AS MUCH AS I AM USING *YOURS*.

SCREAM OF SUTUR.

WHAT DID YOU DO?! I WAS TRYING TO TRAP THEM! I CAN'T DROP THE SPELL!

YOU ARE USING MY POWER, ILLYANA. THOSE HUNTERS HARMED US. THEY *DESERVE* TO BE REPAID TWICE OVER.

THAT ISN'T YOUR CHOICE TO MAKE! *DROP* THE SPELL--

ODE OF OBLIVION.

SUCH BRUTALITY. HOW MANY MORE BODIES WILL YOU LEAVE IN YOUR WAKE?

YOU'RE EVEN MORE OF A THREAT THAN I IMAGINED.

YOU CREATED THIS THREAT. YOU ATTACKED FIRST, EMBODIMENT.

THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED EVENTUALLY. I'D RATHER STOP IT NOW BEFORE YOU GROW IN POWER. PEOPLE LIKE YOU HATE PEACE.

CHAOS IS ILLYANA'S DEFAULT STATE. YOU MUST SEE THAT NOW, DANI. ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY FOR SOME *DEMONS?*

HOW CAN YOU JUSTIFY ANY OF THIS? WHAT WILL BE THE NEXT "WHAT IF"?

WHO WILL YOU SIC YOUR ORGANIZATION ON NEXT BASED ON A *"POSSIBILITY"?* WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO MAKE THOSE DECISIONS FOR EVERYONE?

MY TRACK RECORD IS *CLEAN.* CAN THE SAME BE SAID FOR ILLYANA OR LIMINAL?

I USE MY PREMONITIONS FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

BY ATTACKING TWO INNOCENTS? *YOU* STARTED A WAR.

WE'RE ALWAYS AT WAR, DANI. GROW UP.

YANISA AND KIAN ARRIVED A WHILE AGO. APOLOGIES FOR USING AN ILLUSION TO HAVE THEM EAVESDROP.

I WANTED TO MAKE SURE THEY HEARD YOUR TRUE SENTIMENTS.

HA! THE EXEMPLARS ARE MY MOST TRUSTED. DO YOU REALLY THINK THEY HAVEN'T HEARD THIS BEFORE?

THEY AGREE WITH OUR MISSION AND ARE WILLING TO MAKE ***SACRIFICES.***

I ALSO AGREE WITH YOUR MISSION. BUT DO YOUR EXEMPLARS AGREE WITH YOUR MEANS?

MAGIK AND CAL ***SAVED*** YOU FROM LIMINAL. IS THIS REALLY HOW YOU'RE GOING TO REPAY THEM, EXEMPLARS? WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TOO BECOME A THREAT?

IF THE BONES OF THIS HOUSE ARE TO BE FIXED, WE ARE THE ONES WHO MUST CULL THE ROT INSIDE.

YOU CAN'T REALLY BELIEVE THIS?

WHAT FUTURE ARE WE BUILDING TO, EMBODIMENT? WHEN WILL WE SAY WE'VE DONE ENOUGH?

WE CAN'T JUDGE AN ACT THAT HASN'T OCCURRED YET. WE'RE MEANT TO BE PEACEKEEPERS, NOT A MILITIA.

ONE ***IMPASSIONED*** SPEECH AND YOU'LL GIVE UP JUST LIKE THAT? HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ***QUESTIONING*** MY LEADERSHIP?

YOU'VE GIVEN US NO OTHER CHOICE.

THERE'S ALWAYS A CHOICE. YOU JUST LACK ***CONVICTION*** TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT.

DANI! PROTECT CAL AND EVACUATE THE BASE! I'LL DRAW HER ATTENTION.

I'D BE FAR MORE CONCERNED WITH YOURSELF, ILLYANA. I'M RESIGNED TO THIS BEING MY END.

TAKING YOU OUT WILL BE MY *LAST* GOOD ACT.

CRIMSON BANDS OF--

OOF!

TOO *SLOW*. DID YOU FORGET THAT I CAN SEE THREE SECONDS INTO THE FUTURE?

EVEAR--

TACE.

MMPH!

YOUR MAGIC IS STRONGER THAN MINE.

BUT WHAT GOOD DOES THAT DO IF I PREVENT YOUR SPELL-WORK?

FINE. YOUR MISTAKE.

SHRRRP

SPELLS ONLY SLOW ME DOWN.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE PROBLEM IS WITH USING ENCHANTED WEAPONS?

THEY'RE QUITE INEFFECTIVE WHEN MET WITH A NORMAL BLADE.

MORE SO, THE SWORDSMAN BEGINS TO RELY ON THEIR WEAPON'S POWER VERSUS THEIR TRUE SKILL.

OR I'VE BEEN TRYING TO DE-ESCALATE THIS FIGHT. I THOUGHT THE SAME WAY AS YOU FOR A LONG TIME.

MY PAST HAUNTED ME. I THOUGHT IF I COULDN'T BE *GOOD*, I COULD BE *USEFUL*.

BUT THAT'S NOT HOW THAT WORKS. WE'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIONS OF THE ADULTS IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE WERE KIDS.

WE WERE MEANT TO FEEL SHAME, BUT THERE'S NOTHING TO FEEL SHAME FOR.

YOU DESERVE A LIFE BEYOND BEING A TOOL FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S AGENDA. WE DON'T NEED TO CONTINUE DOWN THIS PATH.

YOU CAN STOP THIS BEFORE WE REACH A POINT NEITHER OF US CAN RETURN FROM.

OH PLEASE.

I DON'T NEED TO LISTEN TO A *DEAD* WOMAN'S WORDS.

I DIDN'T TELL YOU MY PAST TO FEEL PITY FOR ME.

MAYBE MY HANDLERS IN THE SEVENTHS SET ME ON THIS PATH. BUT MAYBE THIS WAS ALWAYS HOW IT WAS MEANT TO BE.

AND TO BE HONEST--

--I CAN'T IMAGINE A WORLD OUTSIDE OF THIS.

EVEN IF I *WANTED* TO.

I COULDN'T EITHER. MY FAMILY HELPED ME SEE A NEW WAY FORWARD.

WELL, MY FAMILY IS *DEAD*.

THAT'S NOT--

I'VE MADE PEACE WITH MY DECISIONS, ILLYANA. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KEEPS RUNNING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR PAST.

WELL, THEN...

...I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT? WELCOME TO *THE LIBRARY OF THE FATES.*

IT'S A NEXUS OF INFORMATION. THE BOOKS HERE CONTAIN MOST KNOWLEDGE--BOTH PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL. YOU MERELY NEED TO KNOW WHERE TO LOOK.

I'M THE FIRST MORTAL TO FORGE A CONNECTION. AFTER ALL, JUST AS LIMBO IS WOVEN THROUGH YOUR MUTANT ABILITY, THIS REALM IS WOVEN THROUGH MINE.

YOU CALL YOURSELF A TACTICIAN, MY DEAR, BUT YOUR *MEASLY* EXPERIENCE PALES IN COMPARISON TO WHAT I'VE HAD TO *ENDURE*.

SHE'S A STRONGER SWORDSWOMAN THAN ME. HER PREMONITIONS ONLY AMPLIFY HER ABILITY.

BOOOM

YET DATA IS ONLY USEFUL IF YOU'RE ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF IT. KNOWLEDGE IS A *BURDEN* IF ONE CAN'T *DISTILL* ITS STORY.

TOO MUCH INPUT QUICKLY BECOMES OVERWHELMING. *REACTION* TIMES SLOW. *INDECISION* TAKES OVER.

WHAT TO PRIORITIZE? WHAT TO LEAVE BEHIND?

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME FOR LONG.

WHO SAID I WAS *HIDING*?

I'M A SWORDS-WOMAN.

BUT I'M ALSO A *MAGE.*

!!!

CRACKLE

YOU WEREN'T ABLE TO SEE ME BEHIND THE BOOKSHELVES. THERE WAS NO PHYSICAL STIMULUS FOR YOUR PREMONITION TO REACT TO.

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF. ALL KNOWLEDGE IS CONTAINED HERE. I'VE KEYED EACH SPELLBOOK TO TRIGGER A SPELL. THERE'S A *MINEFIELD* OF MAGIC AROUND YOU.

I'VE PROVIDED YOU WITH TOO MANY OPENINGS. TOO MANY PORTALS. TOO MUCH MAGIC.

I'VE SHORT-CIRCUITED YOUR MUTANT ABILITY.

JUST IN TIME FOR ONE *LAST* FIGHT.

CLANG

HISS

FARBAUTI'S EVOCATION.

CLANG

YOU FORGOT TO LOOK BEHIND YOU.

BAM

SLA SH

THIS CAN'T BE HOW IT ENDS.

I PREFER TO SAY IT'S A *REDIRECTION.*

YOUR MISSION ISN'T *INHERENTLY* WRONG, EMBODIMENT. I'M ON YOUR SIDE... WHEN YOU *AREN'T* TRYING TO KILL ME.

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME!

I'VE BEEN VIEWED AS A MONSTER MY ENTIRE LIFE. I'VE VIEWED *MYSELF* AS A MONSTER.

I UNDERSTAND MORE THAN YOU KNOW.

I ISOLATED MYSELF TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR MY PAST. NOT TRUSTING OTHERS LED ME DOWN A DARK PATH. JUST LIKE YOU.

THAT FEELING IN YOUR STOMACH ISN'T GUILT. IT'S *SHAME.* PLACED IN YOU BY SOMEONE ELSE.

DON'T LET THEM WIN.

I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO YOU.

I'M NOT GOING TO FORCE YOU TO TALK. BUT MAYBE BEING TRAPPED IN THIS REALM WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO THINK.

I'LL BE BACK ONCE I TAKE CARE OF LIMINAL. HE'S *ONE* THREAT WE BOTH AGREE ON.

ALSO, JUST BETWEEN US SWORDS-WOMEN...

...YOU ALMOST HAD ME.

HEH.

DECAY.

MAGIK!

$#%&.

OH GOOD. YOU'RE BACK. I'VE CLEARED A PATH FOR US TO ESCAPE.

STAND DOWN, LIMINAL. THEY'VE SURRENDERED.

AND HERE I THOUGHT WE WERE *FINALLY* SEEING EYE TO EYE.

WHY DO YOU *ALWAYS* PUT ME IN SUCH A HARD POSITION, ILLYANA?

YOU KNOW I CAN'T DO THAT.

LAGHDU

YOU CAN NEVER BEAT ME. YOU SACRIFICED THE BOY IN VAIN. WHO ELSE WILL DIE FOR YOU?

I'M SICK OF PEOPLE BLAMING ME FOR THEIR ACTIONS.

I'M NOT BLAMING YOU, ILLYANA. I'M TRYING TO PREVENT YOU FROM MAKING A MISTAKE.

I SURPRISINGLY CARE FOR THE BOY. HIS MIND HAS SUCH INTERESTING SCIENTIFIC IDEAS. I'M EXCITED TO PUT THEM TO USE.

YOU'RE RIGHT, LIMINAL.

SCIENCE WAS *CAL'S* EXPERTISE, NOT YOURS. *YOU* WEREN'T INTERESTED IN THIS STAR.

THAT WAS CAL BREAKING THROUGH.

HE FOUND THE SOLUTION. HE FOUND THE FINAL POWER SOURCE FOR MY SPELL.

THIS HAS GONE ON TOO LONG. I'M DONE WITH THIS NIGHTMARE, LIMINAL.

HUAAAGH!

IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP.

I'M STARTING TO BELIEVE YOU'RE A LOST CAUSE, ILLYANA.

GAAK!

I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.

CONTAIN HIM NOW--

YOUR RITUAL ONLY MADE HIM STRONGER! AGAIN!

THE BUILDING IS COLLAPSING WITHOUT THE STAR. WE NEED TO CUT OUR LOSSES.

YOU GIVE UP SO EASILY. GIVE IT A MINUTE.

YOU'RE OUT OF TIME, MAGIK.

'YANA!

WHAT?!

STUCK IN PLACE? HOW SAD.

THE EMBODIMENT WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING...

...A TACTICIAN ALWAYS HAS *MULTIPLE* PIECES ON THE BOARD. WELCOME BACK, *CAL.*

NO...NO, THIS CAN'T BE!

YOU LISTENED TO MY CLUES.

I DID SAY YOU HAD A KNACK FOR MAGIC.

YOU WON'T IMPRISON ME AGAIN! I REFUSE TO GO BACK!

THE STAR'S EQUILIBRIUM ALLOWS BOTH OF US TO COEXIST. THE OUTWARD FORCE OF YOUR POWER IS NEUTRALIZED BY THE INWARD FORCE OF MY SOUL.

YOU STAY CONTAINED, AND I MAINTAIN CONTROL. YOU WERE OUTSMARTED AGAIN.

HOW *EMBARRASSING.*

YOU *KILLED* MY FAMILY. YOU *FORCED* ME TO HURT MY FRIENDS. YOU PUT *ALL* OF THAT ON ME.

BUT THIS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE IS NEVER GOING TO END IF WE DON'T CHART A NEW PATH FORWARD.

THOUGH, I'M NOT ENTIRELY ALTRUISTIC. MY REVENGE IS KNOWING YOU'LL BE TRAPPED *AGAIN.*

YOU MAY HAVE SEALED MY POWER...BUT HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

WHO CARES? YOU'RE JUST MY *SHADOW* NOW.

I'M STARTING TO THINK I'M A BAD INFLUENCE.

NOOOO!

IT'S OVER. IT'S *FINALLY* OVER.

=SOB=

SHHHH. YOU'RE OKAY, CAL. I GOT YOU. YOU'RE *SAFE.*

HOW MUCH TIME HAVE I LOST? HOW *LONG* HAVE I BEEN *TRAPPED* IN MY OWN MIND?

I WAS SO *STUPID* GETTING MYSELF INTO THIS MESS. THANK YOU, ILLYANA, FOR NOT GIVING UP ON ME.

YOU DON'T NEED TO THANK ME FOR ANYTHING. YOU SAVED ME FROM LIMINAL FIRST.

BESIDES, GETTING YOURSELF INTO DANGER SEEMS TO BE A RITE OF PASSAGE AT THIS POINT.

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE CHAOS DANI AND I GOT INTO AS KIDS.

OR STILL GOT INTO WHILE YOU WERE AWAY.

HA!

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

WAIT--THAT'S NOT *FAIR!* NO INSIDE JOKES!

THEY'RE A MESS.

THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

THEY'LL NEED A LEADER--

NO. I RUSHED INTO THINGS AFTER KRAKOA. MY OPTIMISM BLINDED ME TO THE SOCIETY'S FAULTS.

YOUR OPTIMISM IS A *GIFT*, DANI. YOU CAN REBUILD SOMETHING BETTER THAN BEFORE.

MAYBE. I'M NOT SO SURE ANYMORE...

THEY'D BE LUCKY TO HAVE YOU. AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE *BEST* LEADER I KNOW.

DON'T TELL CYCLOPS OR HE'LL GET JEALOUS.

SOMEONE NEEDS TO KEEP HIM ON HIS TOES.

WHY DON'T YOU JOIN ME BACK IN ALASKA? JUGS AND I KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT HOSTING ELDRITCH ENTITIES.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START.

IT'S CRAZY. THE SOCIETY IS LIKE THIS *HUGE* EXTENDED FAMILY.

BUT ALL THAT I WANT TO DO IS GO BACK TO SCHOOL AND FEEL *NORMAL* AGAIN. IS THAT SELFISH?

YOU DESERVE NORMALCY. WE ALL DO. AND WHO'S TO SAY YOU CAN'T KEEP PRACTICING MAGIC WHILE AT SCHOOL?

I DON'T WANT THIS TO BE GOODBYE.

PLEASE. YOU CAN'T GET RID OF ME THAT EASILY. DID YOU FORGET I CAN *TELEPORT?*

SO WHAT'S NEXT, ILLYANA?

I DON'T KNOW. AND THAT'S *TERRIFYING.*

I'VE BEEN *RUNNING* FOR SO LONG, THROWING MYSELF INTO MISSION AFTER MISSION. STAYING IN THE *PRESENT* SO I DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT MY PAST.

I FEEL SO FAR BEHIND. I WORRY THAT I'VE WASTED TOO MUCH TIME.

BUT I'M READY TO TRY SOMETHING *NEW.* TO FIND *BALANCE* AND *REDISCOVER* WHO I AM OUTSIDE OF EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED.

I'M READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP.

#6 Variant by
ANAND RAMCHERON & RAIN BEREDO

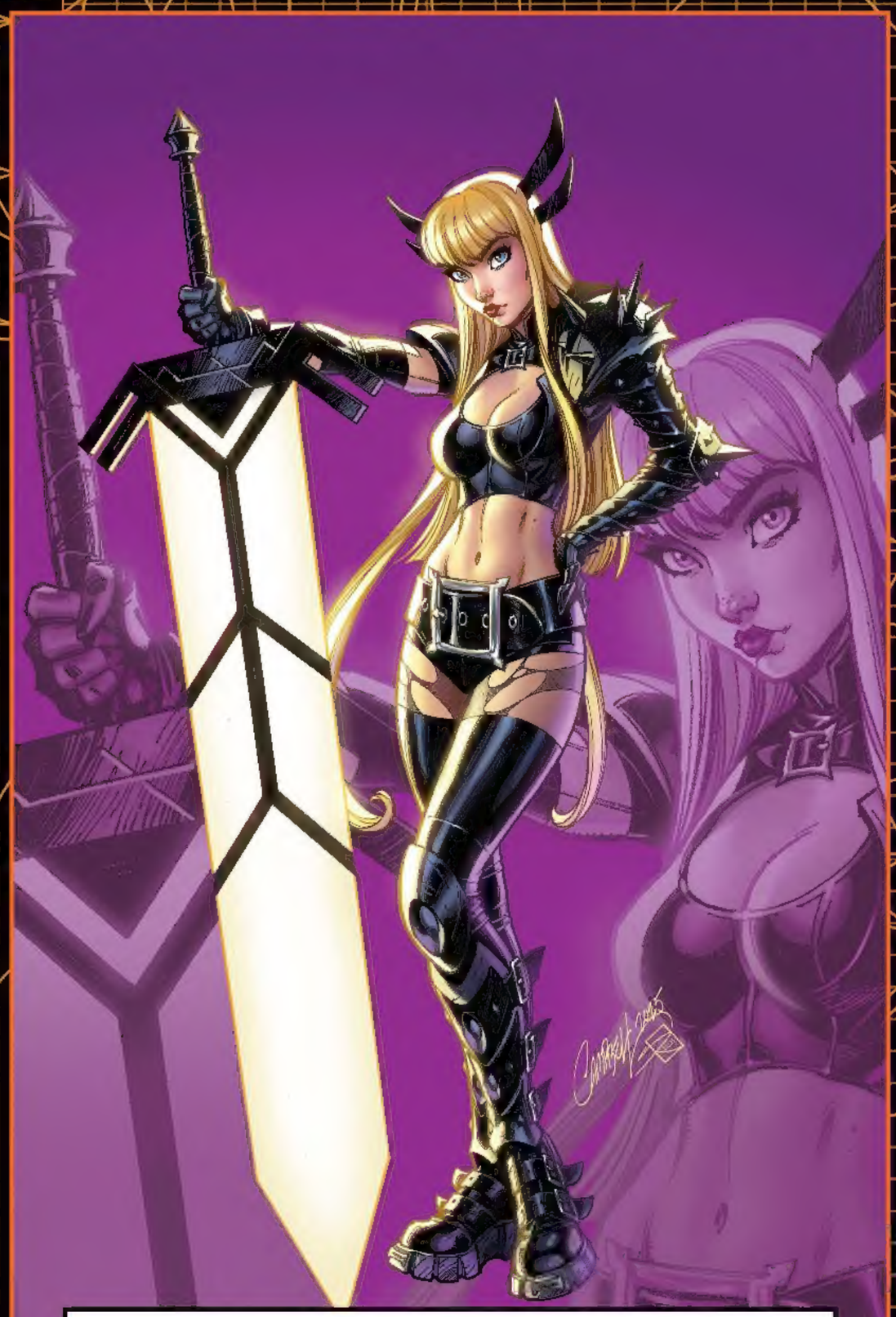
#6 Variant by
BETSY COLA

#7 Variant by
YASMINE PUTRI

#8 Variant by
GERALD PAREL

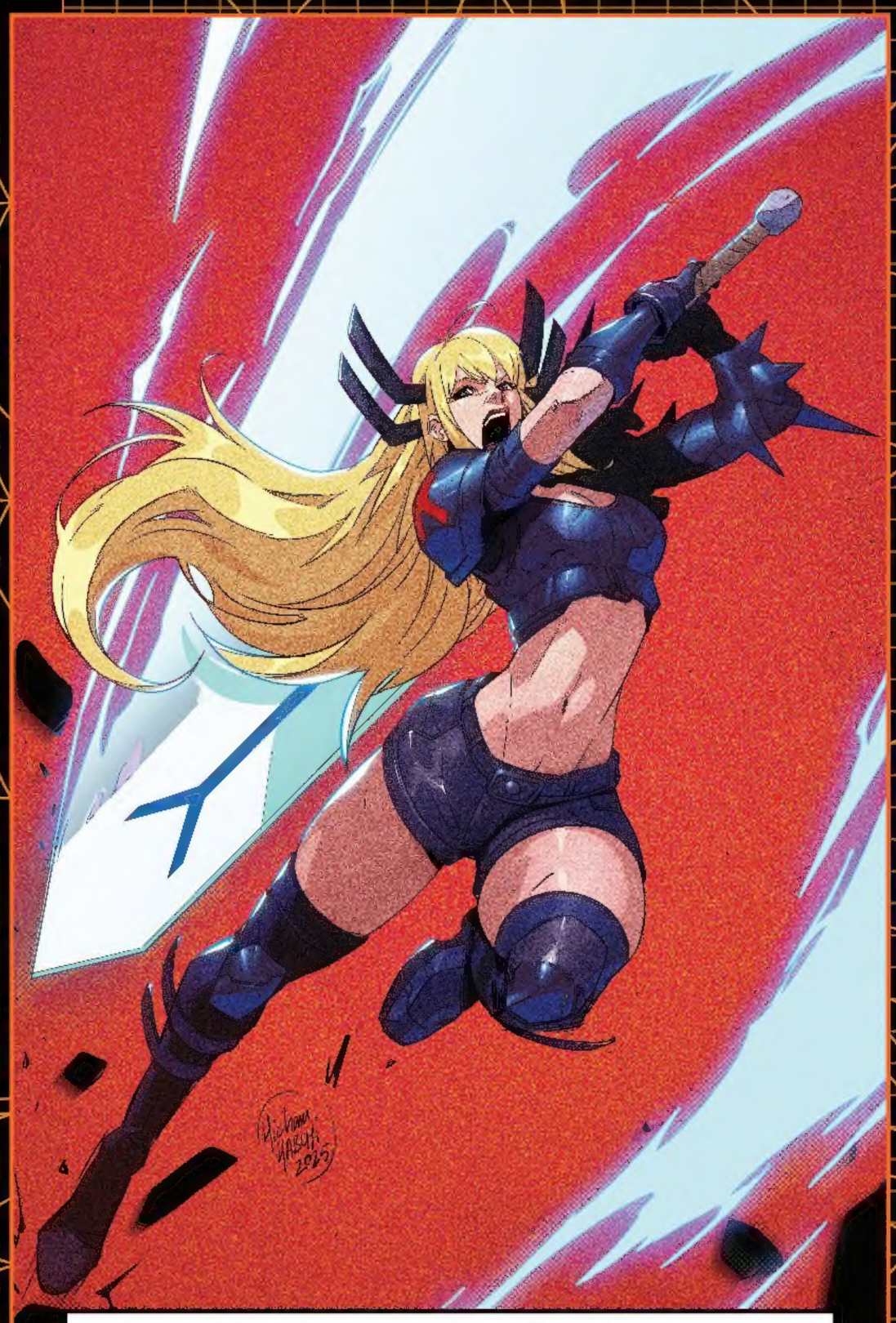
#7 Retrovision Variant by **JOE QUINONES**

#8 Variant by **RUSSELL DAUTERMAN**

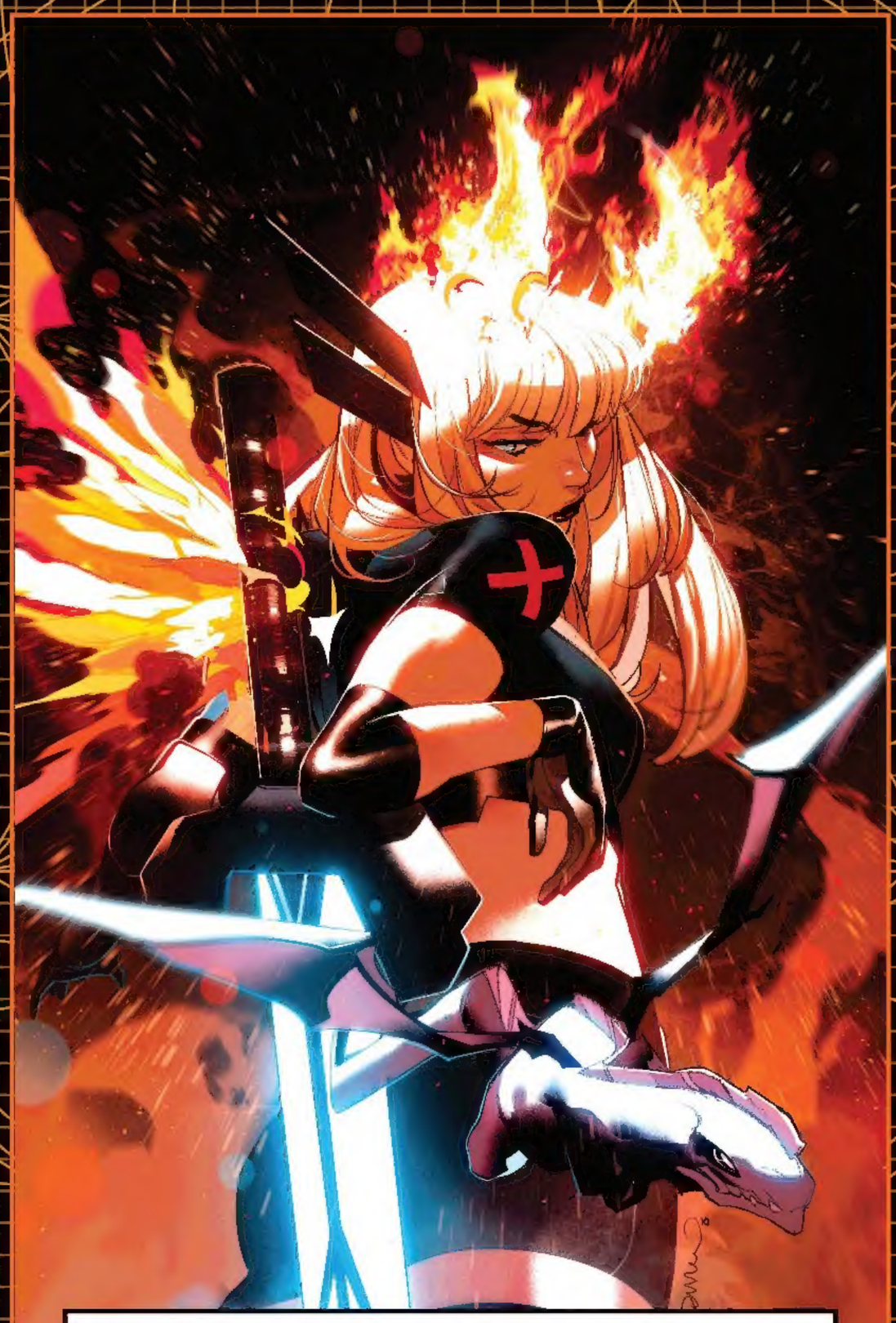


#8 Just Spectacular Collection Variant by
J. SCOTT CAMPBELL & **SABINE RICH**

#9 Variant by
MAHMUD ASRAR & **MATTHEW WILSON**



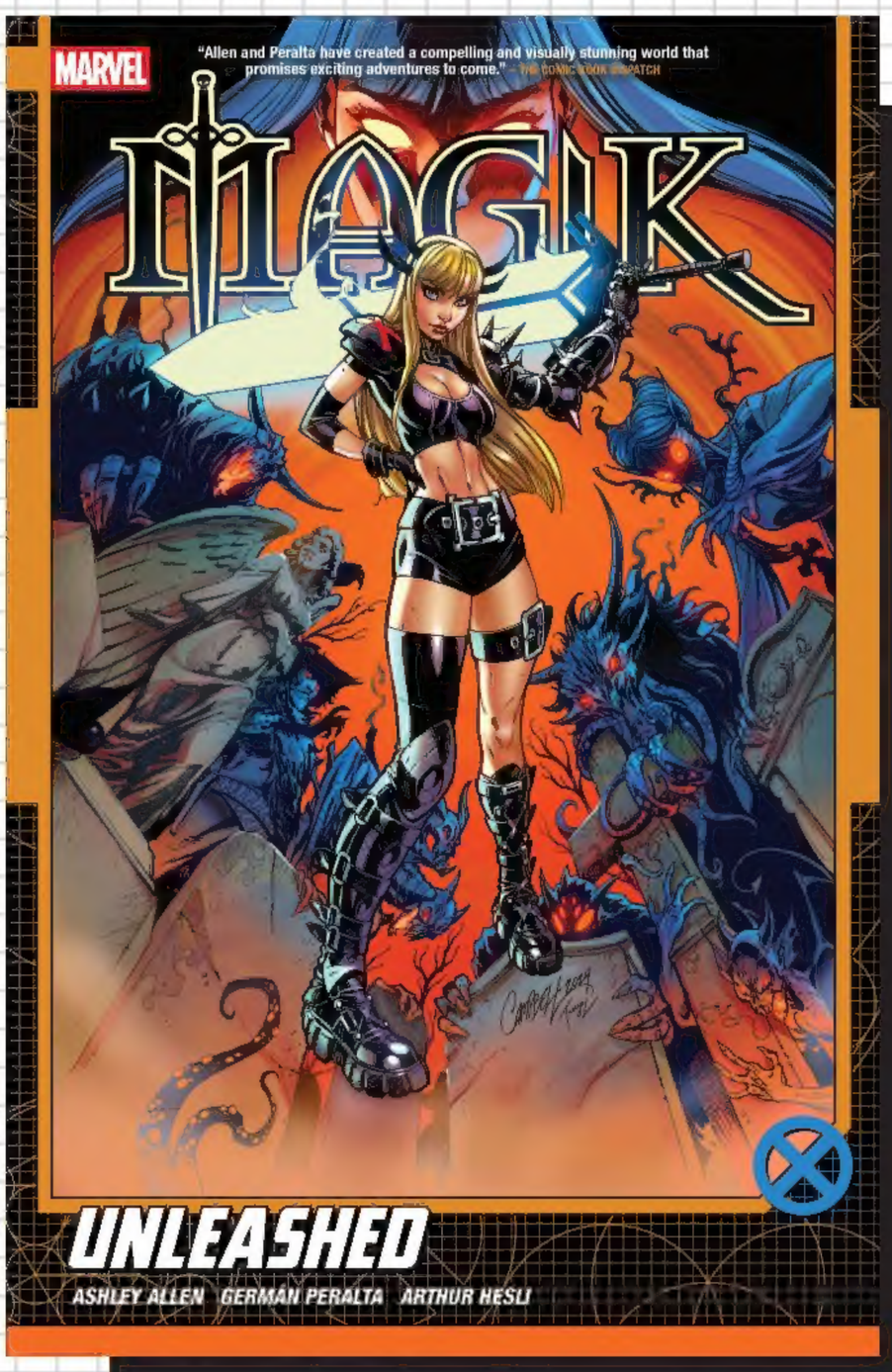
#10 Variant by
HICHAM HABCHI



#10 Variant by
SIMONE DI MEO

MARVEL COLLECTED EDITIONS

ALSO AVAILABLE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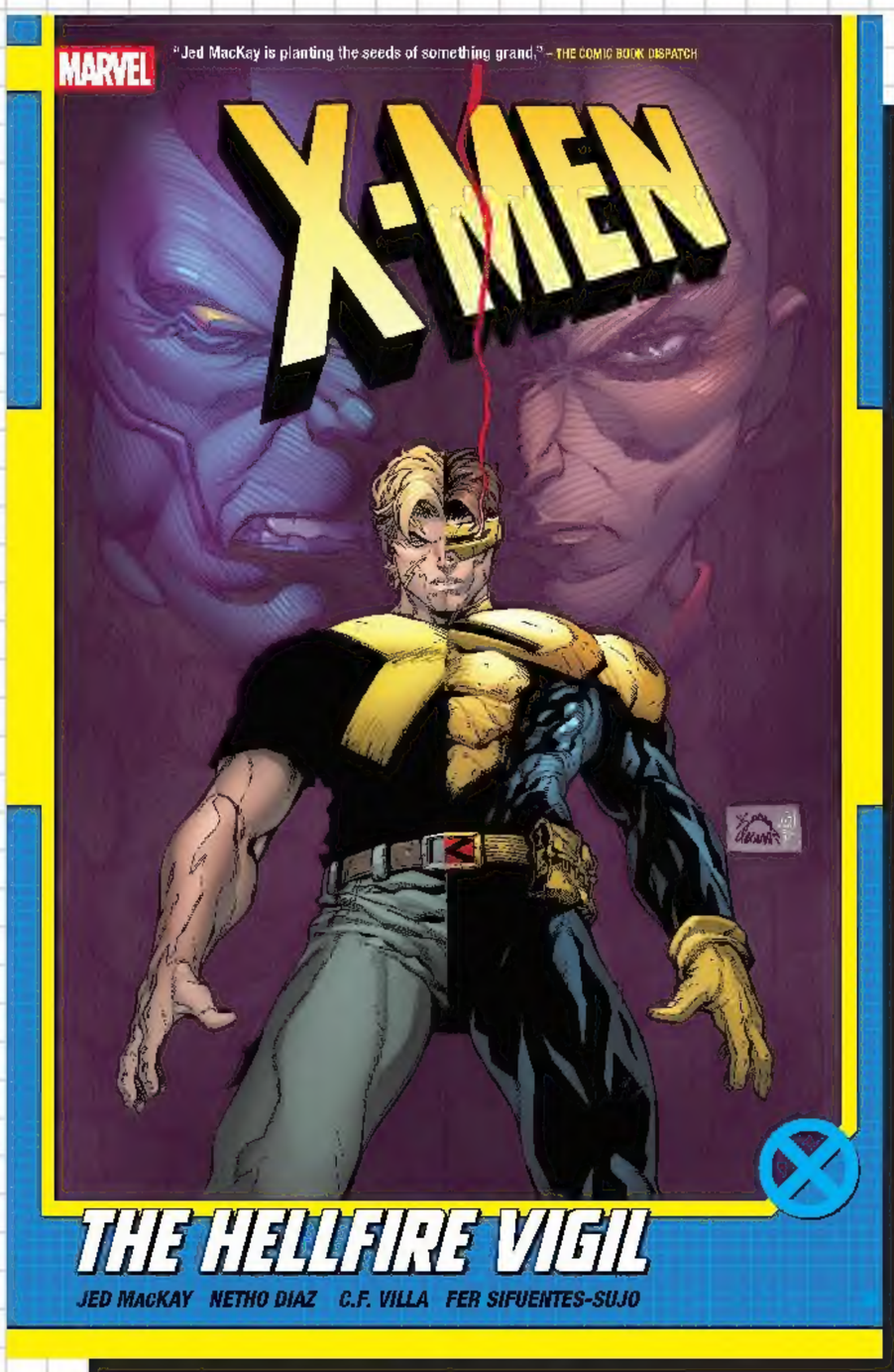
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